

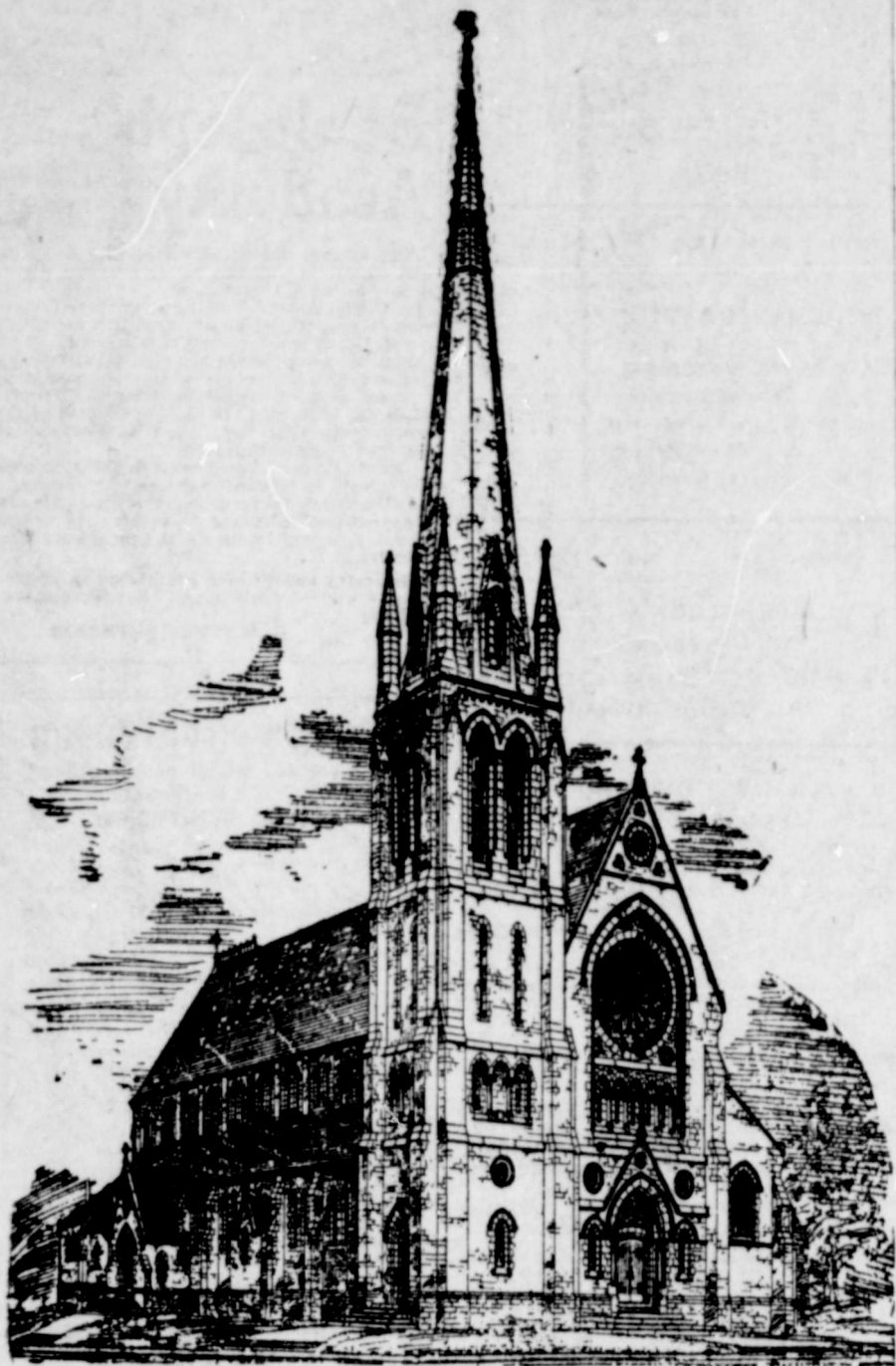
The Catholic Register

"Truth is Catholic; proclaim it ever, and God will effect the rest"—BALMEZ

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AN ORNAMENT TO TORONTO.

ST. HELEN'S NEW CHURCH

Corner-Stone Laid by His Grace Archbishop McEvay—Eloquent Sermon by Rev. J. R. Teefy, C.S.B., Ph.D.—Large Gathering in Attendance.

Sunday, July 19th, was a red letter day for St. Helen's parish, and an epoch-making date for the western portion of the city in which the handsome new church of St. Helen's is situated, for it witnessed the imposing ceremony of the laying of the corner-stone by His Grace the Most Rev. Fergus Patrick McEvay, who thus placed the seal of the church upon the building, the walls of which are already raised some feet above the ground. Some time before 3 o'clock, the hour appointed, the clouds threatened a downpour, but a shower of a few minutes' duration was but the harbinger to blue skies and bright sun, both of which greeted the ecclesiastical procession which at the specified time emerged from the tent where all had vested, and preceded by the processional Cross, filed slowly to where a large wooden cross indicated the spot on which later the altar will stand. His Grace, in mitre and cope and carrying his crozier, was attended by Rev. Fathers Coyle and Canning in dalmatics of white and gold. A long line of acolytes, surpliced choir, Brothers of the Schools, and priests of the city and from outside, followed.

The ceremony began with the blessing of the salt and water to be afterwards used in blessing the edifice. "Our help is in the name of the Lord," intoned the Bishop, "Who made both heaven and earth," responded the surpliced ecclesiastics. After the prescribed prayers the process of the altar was blessed, the procession then moving to where the stone had been placed in position ready to be "laid," the stone was sprinkled with holy water and afterwards presented to His Grace, the sign of the cross was made in several places on its surface. Under the corner-stone were placed copies of the daily papers and Catholic Register, a description of the building and church history, and samples of the coins of the realm and of the new issue of stamps. The placing of the stone was accompanied by the singing of the Litany of the Saints, the fine voice of Rev. Father Staley, C.S.B., being responded to by the entire body of ecclesiastics and acolytes. A number of psalms, including the 136th, "Nisi Dominus edificaverit domum, in vanum laboraverunt qui edificaverunt eam," unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it—were also sung and the circuit of the walls and foundations, blessing the entire building, the dedication in honor of the Blessed Trinity being in three parts, the words of the ritual, "O how this place should be held in awe; for truly this is none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven," giving the key to the entire ceremony. The singing of the Veni Creator preceded the closing prayer, after which the sermon, found elsewhere, was preached by Rev. J. R. Teefy, C.S.B., Ph.D. The discourse, taken from the text "Behold the tabernacle of God with men, was an eloquent exposition, a masterpiece of classical English. It treated of God, His workers, and the significance of His earthly temples, and was delivered with a fervid oratory befitting the majesty of the theme treated.

At the close of the sermon Rev. Father McGrand introduced the Archbishop to those assembled, in the following words: Your Grace,—On behalf of the people of St. Helen's, I tend to you a most hearty welcome. We are honored that your first public appearance since your advent to the Archdiocese of Toronto takes place in connection with the erection of our new church. The love and reverence of this congregation, I assure you of. May your sojourn amongst us be a long and prosperous one and that God may bless all your labors in the earnest prayer of the people of St. Helen's.

His Grace then ascended the temporary pulpit, thus coming face to face for the first time with the greater number of those present. The Archbishop thanked Father McGrand for his words of welcome and for the beautiful silver trowel presented him, which he would always keep as a memento of the occasion. He referred to the eloquent and instructive discourse of his old friend Father Teefy, and to the absence of the pastor, Rev. Father Walsh, who he hoped would return much benefitted. His Grace spoke, too, of the generosity of the people in making sacrifices to build this magnificent temple. In doing this they were imitating St. Helen, who had made many sacrifices that God might be honored. The church would be an ornament to architecture, to solidity and beauty and a testimony to the piety of the people. Here would be taught the doctrine of God and of labor, of peace, charity and love, a doctrine which all men should have for those not having them were not fit to live in a Christian community. At the conclusion the Archbishop gave his blessing and the Te Deum being sung the gathering, which was the largest seen for many years at a similar ceremony, dispersed. The handsome collection of \$15,000 was taken up.

Sunday being a busy day in the different parishes, many who would otherwise have been present were unavoidably absent. Among those in attendance were Rev. Father Brick, C.S.S.R., rector of St. Patrick's; Rev. Father Staley, C.S.B., Rev. Dr. Teefy, C.S.B., Rev. Father Collins, O.M.I., Ottawa, and Rev. Fathers Coyle, Canning, Gallagher, Whelan, Walsh, Hand and Kidd, Rev. L. Staley of Kingston, Rev. Father Coffey, S.J., of Guelph, Rev. Father Coyle was deacon, Rev. H. Canning sub-deacon, and Rev. Father McGrand master of ceremonies. Others present were Mrs. Ryan McEvay, mother of the Archbishop; Mrs. Alex. Macdonnell, whose family donated the old site; Messrs. Pegg, Hass, James McLaughlin, Peter Ryan, W. T. J. Lee, P. McCabe, M. J. Haney, Eugene O'Keefe, F. A. Moore, E. J. Hearn, Frank Lee, Thos. Ford, W. J. Boland, W. E. Blake, W. Mallon, Frank Walsh, F. O'Connor, M. Ryan, J. Sullivan, John Barrie and Drs. Spence, MacMahon, W. McKeown, MacConnell, McKenna and M. J. Crotte.

THE NEW CHURCH.

The new church will be 175 feet long by 76 in width. It will be early French Gothic in style and will be of Caen stone and red pressed brick. It will have tower and spire

and will seat 1,000 people. Accommodation will be arranged for meetings of the societies of the parish. It will be finished in oak and the general equipment of the latest and best. The estimated cost is \$100,000, and the architect is Mr. W. A. Holmes of Toronto.

ST. HELEN'S PARISH.

It is now some thirty-five years since Mr. Alexander Macdonnell gave some land situated on the corner of Lansdowne avenue and Dundas street, then forming part of the village of Brockton, for Church purposes. Rev. Father Rooney, who at that time was parish priest of St. Mary's, purchased an acre and a half additional and the foundation for a new parish property was thus acquired. Father Rooney built a church, the first on the site, which was dedicated by Archbishop Lynch in 1872. The church was dedicated to St. Francis and St. Helen, Francis being the name of the builder and Helen in accordance with the wish of the donor of the land. In time Francis was dropped from the title and the church became known simply as St. Helen's. In 1888 an addition of a large, new sanctuary and transepts was made, by the then pastor, the Very Rev. Dean McCann, now Vicar-General of the Archdiocese. The corner-stone of the new addition was laid on the Feast of the Seven Dolours, by His Lordship Bishop O'Mahoney, the intention at the time being that the new addition should form the beginning of a new church. When the new part was completed the church was blessed by His Lordship Bishop O'Connor. The enlarged church saw the parish develop so quickly and became itself so surrounded by commercial interests and so close to the traffic of the railway, that it was thought best to change the site, and the present situation, corner Dundas St. and St. Clarens avenue, was obtained.

THE SCHOOLS OF ST. HELEN'S.

Catholic education in St. Helen's was early attended to. Away back in 1857 a school was established by Rev. Father Walsh, afterward Archbishop of Toronto, in a frame building on St. Clarens avenue. Afterwards for some years, classes were held in the church basement, until in 1883 a four-roomed brick school was built by Father McCann. In 1892 a similar building, devoted to the boys of the parish, was erected. At present there is an attendance of about 550 pupils, in charge of the Brothers and the Sisters of Loretto.

THE PASTORS.

For a short time St. Helen's was a mere mission chapel attended from St. Mary's, but in 1875 it was erected into a separate chapel with Rev. Father Shea as its first pastor. Those who remember Father Shea recall a most amiable and generous character whose earthly career was suddenly ended, while life was yet in its prime. Next in succession was Very Rev. Father Conway, appointed Dean of Toronto in 1882. Father Conway was still alive and in harness, and is known throughout Ontario as one of its most zealous apostles of Temperance. Very Rev. Father McCann followed. It was during Father McCann's incumbency that the parish passed from the condition of a pioneer settlement, known by the harsh-sounding name of Brockton, to general recognition as St. Helen's, one of the most substantial parishes of the city. When Father McCann was appointed Rector of the Cathedral in 1891, St. Helen's, its schools and presbytery, formed a picturesque group, surrounded by tall poplar trees, which were an ornament to that portion of the city, and the spiritual and financial standing of the parish were on an assured basis that spoke for future prosperity.

Dean Cassidy succeeded Father McCann. The charge of Father Cassidy in St. Helen's was not of many years, death coming while he was yet far from old age. Father Cassidy was well known in many outside missions, and wherever he worked he is remembered for his zeal in the cause for which his life was spent.

The present pastor of Lourdes, Rev. J. M. Cruise, was the next in charge. The regime of Father Cruise at St. Helen's is as but a thing of yesterday, so fresh is it in the minds of the people, and so fruitful was it in spiritual works that many of the practices established by him were by his successor embodied in the life of the parish and still form part of its active existence. Nor was the temporal part neglected. It was in the time of Father Cruise that the present excellent system of raising money for paying off the old debt and providing for a new church was drawn. A map of the parish was drawn and every street and house located, districts were laid out and collectors sent out monthly, who gathered regular sums for parish purposes. This system was continued by his successor until the debt was eventually cleared and a substantial surplus laid aside with which to begin the erection of the new handsome edifice.

The present pastor of St. Helen's is Rev. James Walsh. It happens somewhat fortunately that Father Walsh is absent on a visit of a few months to Ireland, his native home, for the purpose of recuperating his somewhat impaired health; otherwise we should have to pass over his part in the work of St. Helen's very lightly, for so averse is Father Walsh to publicity that if present we should respect his wish and say little or nothing about him. His absence, however, enables us to say that while the general work of the parish has received every attention at his hands, his most strenuous efforts have been directed to the work of building the new church. For every dollar gathered by the collectors he promised to try to gather or give another, and so faithfully did priest and people work that now the handsome sum of thirty-

three thousand was in hand to make a comfortable beginning. It was doubtless sometimes hard for Father Walsh to keep back the impetuous ones of his flock who would have begun some years ago the erection of the new church, but the present satisfactory condition, must convince all of the prudence of the course adopted by their Pastor. Father Walsh works constantly and quietly. To him harsh means for any purpose are unknown. A real Soggarth Aroon, he walks amongst his people with a kindly courtesy and unobtrusiveness amounting to a beautiful humility and his reward is the harmony that everywhere exists between himself and his people.

THE ASSISTANTS.

St. Helen's has been favored with a succession of excellent pastors. It has been no less fortunate in its assistants. Its first assistant was Rev. Father Harold, who by many is yet lovingly remembered. To Father Harold belongs the credit of giving St. Helen's its first musical training. Filled with love for the elevating art, Father Harold spent many hours of his time in the formation of a choir, and the younger members especially were the object of his attention for in them was his chief hope. These responded to his efforts, and the embryo choir was a germ of such promise that the musical spirit has never since passed away, and there have been periods in the history of the parish when the music of St. Helen's would have been a credit in churches of much greater pretensions.

So many others followed that some may be forgotten. The passage of some was but fleeting. Many will remember Rev. Father O'Hagarty, the lovable young Irish priest, who died shortly after leaving St. Helen's, when stationed at St. Catharines. Father McBride, of brilliant intellect and versatile talent, whose short life of thirty-eight years was one period of perpetual activity, and whose chief work outside of his priestly office, was like that of his predecessor, Father Harold, the pursuit of the musical art. His work also left its impress on the parish in whose service his life was ended.

Others who gave of their time as assistants at St. Helen's for periods of different lengths were, Father McPhillips, now dead, whose energy succeeded in organizing a most successful Altar Society; Rev. Father Morris, once one of the brilliant ones in the Ontario priesthood; he, too, is gone to the bourne beyond; Rev. Father Thos. Shanahan, a Toronto boy who was given but a short earthly career before being called to the reward of a blameless life; Father Minehan, the present energetic pastor of St. Peter's, and Father Richardson, who, with Father Cruise, introduced a knowledge of Plain Chant into the parish, all saw service at St. Helen's. To the present assistant, Rev. Father McGrand, much of the burden of the initiatory work of the new church has fallen. Active and competent, Father McGrand has given a great deal of personal service to the work of looking after the finances and pushing forward the erection of the new building and his enthusiasm imparting itself to the parishioners, has been a factor of no small moment in the accomplishment of the work upon which the energies of the priests and people of St. Helen's are now bent.

ST. HELEN'S PEOPLE.

It may seem to some that the parishioners of every parish are very much alike. This, however, is not always so, and the people of St. Helen's have some very distinctive qualities. They have to begin with the prestige which always attaches itself to an old settlement. In a new city like Toronto, half a century of residence gives the aristocracy which attaches itself everywhere to the old families of a district. A great many of its people live on the ground upon which their fathers and grandfathers lived before them. It is not a parish of transients. Its people have helped and helped generously in the work of the development of their parish, every effort of the pastor being seconded willingly and cheerfully by the bulk of the congregation. In the schools and parish societies they are always actively and practically interested, and both Father Walsh and Father McGrand have often been heard to declare, "there are no better people than St. Helen's anywhere." Despite the fact that five other parishes have been taken whole or in part from St. Helen's, it is now amongst our largest parishes. St. Cecilia's, West Toronto, St. Leo's, Mimico, the Holy Family, Parkdale, St. Anthony's and part of St. Francis, were all once part of St. Helen's. Despite the numerous

off-shoots there are still six hundred families in St. Helen's.

This somewhat local history may seem of little moment to some, but after all it concerns an important parish in an important city. It deals, too, with a portion of Toronto which promises to be the centre of a great commercial and residential centre and with the building of a magnificent temple, worthy of Cathedral rank, and of the priests and people, remote and near, whose work and desire have all tended to its erection.

THE SERMON.

Rev. Father Teefy took for his text: Apos. xxi., 3—Behold the Tabernacle of God with men, and He will dwell with them. And they shall be his people; and God Himself with them shall be their God.

The Heavens tell the glory of God. His name is written in letters of wonder upon the earth; the mighty waters render testimony to Him, and the swelling waves rise to sing His praises. Day uttereth speech to-day and night serves to reveal His vaster depths. All nature is one great temple. Why, therefore in the history of religion do we see special places devoted to divine worship where people believe that He who is everywhere sojourns especially there, places where God and man meet together for their highest interests? Why does the human race—why does the elite of the human race, the Church—having the grassy plains and the rocky heights, the wide horizon and the starry dome of the skies—why does the Church, as if disdainful these, confine her religion to houses made with hands? She summons all the arts to aid her, she calls upon her children to be generous that this new house of God may be somewhat worthy of Him, and worthy of themselves; that it may abide as a memorial of their faith and love—and be their legacy to future generations. This, praiseworthy though it is, does not answer the question. Is God localized? Is prayer stifled, inspiration shut out, because of this ceremony and the building to be erected upon this stone? Did not Our Lord say that the time had come when God should be worshipped in spirit and in truth? "The hour cometh and now is, when the true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth. For the Father seeketh such to adore Him. God is a spirit; and they that adore Him must adore Him in spirit and in truth. No emancipation could be more formal. God is a spirit. He is therefore everywhere. We must adore in spirit. The place matters not; it is the state, the action of the soul. This is the question which my discourse should answer. His substance is found in my text, "Behold the Tabernacle of God with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people and He shall be their God." God, Who is naturally present everywhere, makes choice of a very special sojourn to dwell with men. This is the first lesson starting from the throne and which our divine Theologian transmits to us: "Behold a Tabernacle of God with men." This free choice of God is the first reason of our temples, of the ceremony which the Pontiff is performing and by which he is setting aside a future building to be likewise a tabernacle of God with men.

There is a principle to which we must always return to understand anything Christian. It is, that God having created because He chose to do so, has not willed to abide in the mere necessary relations which His creative act established. He has not found it good merely to be a cause; this effect which we call the universe, a workman to these works, a law to these movements, a suffering master to these wills. He has been pleased to unite himself to His creatures by relations much more close, much more profound, and more full of life, the relations of Father, of brother, and of friend. Scripture and Theology speak of relations of spouse, relations founded upon community of nature, perfected by unity of life and submitted by community of sanctity, glory and beatitude. He willed first that there should be a creation, this forms the natural order. He likewise willed that it should be divine, this is the supernatural order, since it is manifest that divinity belongs naturally only to God. With reference to anything else than God it is absolutely supernatural. It is communicated; it is always a pure grace; the grace of God, life everlasting.

Now in this transcendent effusion of himself which he made, and in His tremendous plan we call the Incarnation, God took not all created natures, but our created nature. He did not take the angelic nature. He

did not take mere material nature, but he took human nature, which has its head amongst the spirits and its feet amongst the corporal creation. He took this human nature in such a way that it was for evermore His and His alone. Thou art My Son, this day have I gotten Thee. Thou art My Son in whom I am well pleased. All the complacency, all the divinity was there, all the light and majesty, the sanctity, the power. He took that human nature and clasped it forever, in the personal embrace of the second person of the Holy Trinity. The Babe of Bethlehem was God, the man, the preacher of Judea and Galilee, the crucified of Calvary. Why did He go so far? God so loved the world that He gave His only Beloved Son for the world. But did not this Man-God stand apart, was He not alone? If a created nature should thus be deified, if the wood of humanity is, to be held in the furnace of the Divinity, surely this belongs to One and One alone.

Is this one being, this Man-God, the only one Who shall be raised to such a dizzy height? Shall no one else taste of His sweetness or share in His gifts? Can we gaze on humanity thus crowned and deified, and never hope from the depths of our misery for a beam of light or a word of pardon or of joy in time or eternity. Is this Incarnation the beginning and end of His plan? Is He the only Son? True, He is the only consubstantial Son; He is the Master-piece and the essential part of the plan; He is the pledge of countless others, who through Him will share in His joy, His glory and His kingdom. He thus began the great work of building a tabernacle within His creation by taking a corner-stone, who is at once the splendor of the Father, the glory of His substance, Life Eternal. Taking and cutting that stone from the mountain without hands, an immutable foundation, He built upon it a tabernacle in which He would abide and be the God of His people. This was the starting point of that wisdom which reaches from earth to heaven with might and orders all with sweetness. This is the beginning of that religion which would regain for God His rights over the hearts of men and would gain for men their pardon, their peace and their beatitude. He opened the series then of His work in the supernatural order by a masterpiece. It was a bond attaining the union of the divinity with His creature in a transcendent manner. The last has become the first and the first the last, the Alpha is the Omega. Christ the Word-made flesh is the head of all creatures, the first of all adorers, the fulness of all, God made man. After that, let man sin and let sin force the hand of justice, the final end of creation is obtained, the glory of God is secured. He is adored in spirit and in truth. Wisdom goes forth from the eternal throne to sow the seed; the harvest is yet to come.

We heard of it in Ephrata; we found it in the fields of the wood; we will go into His tabernacle; we will worship in the place where His feet have stood.

Behold my brethren a Tabernacle of God with men. Wisdom hath built herself an House, here is the divine place, the supernatural, an individual man, eternally distinct from the other children of Adam, this is He of whom He said Himself, "Overturn this Temple, and in three days I will build it up again." The plenitude of the divinity dwells within Him corporally and by this all plenitude, that of truth, reason, science, power, goodness, beauty, love, and as in this sacred place is found all that God can give to a creature, so there is found here all that any creature, that all creatures together, can give to God. This, then, is the place and the only place of true religion. This is the corner-stone blessed by excellence, re-erected by the Jews of old, placed on the corner of the Church, placed in the corner of this city where you and your children may come to worship God, this is the place of religion, Jesus Christ, God blessed forever. Nor does this unity of Christ in whom God dwells exclude not the multitude. It makes way for the multitude, it is the gate by which the multitude will enter, it is the outstretched arms of love embracing all, it is the stream whose torrent rejoices the City of God. I saw the River of Life, says St. John, a splendid River flowing from the Throne of God which is the Lamb, and in that torrent there are the souls of generations. Jesus Christ, in the design of God is the first-born amongst many brethren. He is the plenitude of God; and whoever wishes may receive of this plenitude.

Not only, therefore, was the human nature of Him who is the Light of the World wrapped to the dizzy heights of the Divinity, but He was to pour out upon others the generosity of His own Divine Love. Through His own fulness He was to hallow the stones of this sanctuary, and make of this building a Tabernacle of God where He himself would dwell and where you should be His people. There is nothing so frequently pre-figured, nothing so carefully described as that temple of which Jesus Christ himself is the Corner Stone, and which we call the Church of the Living God. That Church, though it is a visible Church, made external and brought into touch with men and women and things by human ministers in a visible organization; it is nevertheless, far too wide and far too spiritual to be limited by any space, however ample, on this earth's surface. It is as wide as the whole world, and as Catholic as all time. It has no roof but the firmament which covers the earth. It is the kingdom of God, claiming every foot of the world's surface, and every human being in His generation, claiming them as its own by living right. It is the continuation of the Incarnation, the perpetuation of God and man in



ARCHBISHOP McEVAY LAYING THE CORNER-STONE.

(Continued on page 5.)