

BLESSING OF NEW CHURCH AT ST. PIERRE.

The blessing of the new church at St. Pierre, Man., took place on Wednesday, Oct. 19, at 10 o'clock a.m. It is a fine Romanesque church in brick, 125 feet long, 50 feet wide in the nave, and 66 feet in the transept, 45 feet high, with a high steeple to the left of the entrance and a smaller one to the right. The corner stone was laid in 1899. The architect is Jos. Arthur Godin, of Montreal, and his father, E. Godin, conducted the undertaking. The inner furniture (pews, confessionals, pulpits, staircase to gallery, etc.) was made by Paquet & Godbout, of St. Hyacinthe, Que.

This is the fourth place of Catholic worship erected in the village of St. Pierre. The first was a small log chapel put up in 1878. In 1880 this made room for a larger church, which was again replaced by a still larger one in 1884, this last remaining till this spring, when it was pulled down and the parishioners worshipped in a large tent while the new edifice was building.

On Tuesday afternoon a large number of friends, clerical and lay, took the train from Winnipeg and St. Boniface to Otterburne, on the Emerson branch, whence there was a pleasant five-mile drive to St. Pierre. The weather was beautiful and mild both Tuesday and Wednesday. Rev. Father Jolys, who became the first resident pastor of this parish in 1880, and to whom is due the flourishing condition of this settlement, received his many guests with his usual tactful hospitality. All the clergy were entertained at a generous and tasty supper, or rather, late dinner, in the evening, after which in the town hall everybody witnessed a charming entertainment provided by the girls and boys under the direction of the Sisters of Jesus and Mary. "Zelie, or the Martyr to Obedience," was played with spirit and feeling by the young girls of the convent, and held the attention of the large audience that thronged the hall and frequently manifested by applause their appreciation of the naturalness of the young players. Between the acts, which were three in number, Mr. Ruet, a former singer at the Conservatoire de Paris, now working at the brick-venereing of the new convent, sang a couple of high class opera selections and gave evidence of a baritone voice of rare richness and flexibility. An amusing dialogue, with clever practical hits in the line of defects to be corrected, was well rendered by four bright lads. Then one of the larger girls spoke a graceful address to the Vicar General, who represented the Archbishop in the latter's absence.

The Very Rev. F. A. Dugas, V.G., replied in a few suitable words, expressing his regret that the Archbishop himself could not be present, owing to a meeting of the Episcopate in the east, and congratulating both the worthy pastor on the success of his efforts in church and school work and the good Sisters whose skilful training was so evident in the delightful entertainment given by their pupils. Rev. Father Jolys thanked the Very Rev. Vicar General for honoring the parish by his presence and encouraging words, and went on to relate how, during the last four years, the devoted Sisters had persuaded their willing pupils to offer, toward the building of the church, a special annual contribution. Several of his artistic friends had remarked upon the beauty of the delicate gold arabesque forming the frieze of the cornice in the new church. He (Father Jolys) could not help thinking that God must see in that golden arabesque the pure gold of the offerings made by those children in whose innocence he is so well pleased. Father Drummond, being requested by the pastor to speak, remarked upon the curious coincidence that this new church, dedicated in honor of St. Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, the the Rock on which Christ's Church is built, should be dedicated to the service of God on the feast of St. Peter of Alcantara, one of the most heroic figures in Catholic history. As our Lord once told St. Theresa that He never refused any grace asked through the intercession of St. Peter of Alcantara, to-morrow would be a blessed opportunity for all the parishioners of St. Pierre to present their petitions before the Throne of Grace.

Wednesday morning was ushered in by one of those radiant autumnal days so common in this country. The cloudless sun, shining through a temperate atmosphere, played upon the graceful banners of the local associa-

tions that formed a long procession after the numerous clergy in cotta and cassock. There was first the Children's Sodality of the Holy Angels, then the Children of Mary, the Ladies of St. Anne, the St. Joseph Society of l'Union Metisse and the St. Jean Baptiste Society, these two latter all grown men. This imposing cortege proceeded from the priest's residence to the church, where the faithful took their places, filling all the pews, while the clergy, singing the liturgical prayers, went round the church on the outside and afterwards on the inside, the Vicar General sprinkling the walls with holy water.

Both the interior and exterior of this new edifice are very effective; the proportions of steeple, nave and transept are all in excellent taste as visible from without, while within the church looks much larger and loftier than it really is, the lines of ceiling, walls and chancel are pleasing to the eye, the pulpit is a fine piece of carving, the marble altar, a relic of the third church, is a marvel of neat simplicity, the statues are truly representative. It may be as well to state here that the cost of this beautiful church is \$25,000, of which \$10,000 are already paid, and a system of regular contributions has been organized that will ensure the liquidation of the remaining debt in a few short years. The cost would have been vastly greater, had not the parishioners themselves furnished and hauled all the stone for the high and solid foundations, as well as all the sand used in the building. There were no less than 3,500 loads of these two materials. The same zealous parishioners hauled 55,000 feet of timber, cut by themselves at a distance of 25 or 30 miles.

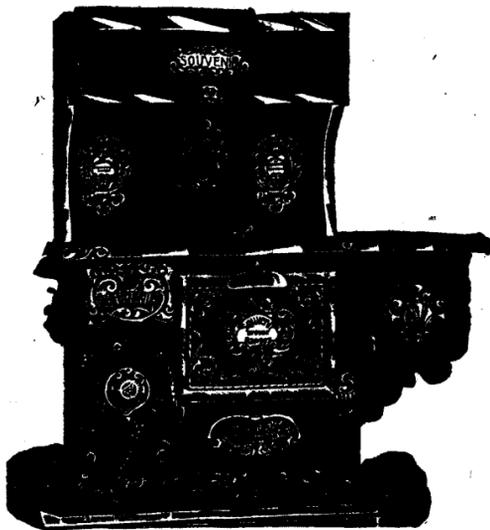
After the ceremony of the blessing the first High Mass in the new church was celebrated by the Very Rev. F. A. Dugas, with Rev. Father Frigon, O.M.I., as deacon, and Rev. Dom Antoine, C.R.I.C., as subdeacon, and Rev. A. Giroux as Master of Ceremonies. Rev. Father Sauve played the harmonium and directed the choir of male voices. Directly after the Gospel, Rev. Father Fillion preached from 3 Kings, 8, 65, "On that day Solomon celebrated a great festival, and all Israel with him." He said that the church was the house of God and also the house of all the people, developing these two ideas with appropriate applications. At the end of the Mass, Rev. Father Jolys addressed the Vicar General, reviewing the noble work of his parishioners in the building of this new church. He had noticed that several abuses had disappeared in proportion as the walls of the new building rose; it was evident that, coincidentally with the erection of the material temple, the spiritual edifice of souls grew also apace, and the generosity of his flock had been rewarded by the infinitely more precious gifts of grace. The Very Rev. Vicar General, replying, said it was always the best policy to be generous. He remembered a parish in one of the mountainous districts of the Province of Quebec, where, for the building of a new church, it had become necessary to tax the parishioners for the levying of a sum that seemed very large for a new and struggling settlement. Many complained and predicted that, before the end of the term of years fixed for the special tax, a large number of the settlers would have gone away to avoid the heavy burden. When these dismal prophecies were uttered not one of the new settlers possessed a buggy. When the tax was all paid in, not one settler had gone away, and every one of them owned a buggy. And the explanation is easy. God, who metes out the sunshine and the rain, the delicate ad-

(Continued on Page Seven).

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