

ON ST. CRONAN'S MONASTIC LANDS

ROSCREA'S £30,000 VOCATIONAL SCHOOL BLESSED AND OPENED

Bishop & Minister At Historic Ceremony

Roscrea's £30,000 new Vocational School, situated on an acre and a half of land on Corville Road on the outskirts of the town and sited on the ancient monastic lands of the parish patron, St. Cronan, was solemnly blessed by his Lordship, Most Rev. Dr. Rodgers, Bishop of Kilmaloe, and formally opened by the Minister for Education (General Mulcahy) in impressive ceremonies on Monday last.

The school, a two-storey building with fine bright and airy classrooms, erected in full harmony with modern constructional requirements, took less than 16 months to build and it replaces the old school in the Dormer House in the courtyard of the 13th century Ormond Castle at Castle St.

Vocational classes were first opened in Roscrea in 1929. Two years ago the Committee purchased the Corville Road site from Mr. Daniel O'Meara. The work of building the school was begun by the contractors, McManus Bros., Roscrea, in April 1955 and completed on August 12 this year. The architect was Chevalier Sheehan and the clerk of works Mr. Edward Spillane, Nenagh. The school opened for instruction on Sept. 4. It has five classrooms with full modern equipment for the teaching of woodwork, metalwork, domestic economy, commercial and general education subjects, a one-storey wing for practical work, and there are facilities for instruction in rural science. The heating and lighting arrangements are of the very latest type and there are cloak-rooms and a up-to-date shed for bicycles. There are five teachers at the moment and it is the intention to increase the number to six whole-time and two part-time instructors.

MASS IN PARISH CHURCH

At 10.30 on Monday morning his Lordship the Bishop presided at Mass celebrated at St. Cronan's Parish Church by Rev. P. Whelan, Chaplain, Sean Ross Abbey. The assistants to his Lordship were: V. Rev. J. H. Meehan, Adm., Roscrea, and V. Rev. T. Daffey, P.P., Kyle and Knock. In the Sanctuary were: V. Rev. T. Mulvihill, P.P., Newport; V. Rev. C. Lee, D.D., Adm., Thurles; V. Rev. Fr. Aidan, O.C.S.O., representing Rt. Rev. Dom Camillus Claffey, Lord Abbot, Mount St. Joseph Abbey, Roscrea; Rev. W. Hart, C.C., Birr; Rev. E. Hogan, C.C., Roscrea; Rev. T. Hogan, C.C., do.; and Rev. J. Sexton, C.C., do.

The Mass was attended by pupils of the school, their parents, and the general public. Also present were the Minister for Education and Mrs. Mulcahy; the Co. Manager (Mr. J. P. Flynn), the C.E.O. (Mr. S. O'Donoghue, M.A.); the Chairman of the Co. Council (Mr. D. Hanafin), and the Chairman of the Vocational Education Committee (Mr. T. J. McGrath, Nenagh), as well as other members of the Co. Council and Vocational Committee.

BLESSING

Most Rev. Dr. Rodgers, who was escorted by V. Rev. Father Meehan, Father Mulvihill, Dr. Lee, and Father Daffey and the other priests, blessed the entrance to the school and the outside surroundings and the classrooms of the building. The school was dedicated to Christ the King and a statue in the hall of Christ Righ,

presented by the pupils, was also blessed by his Lordship. Rev. T. Whelan was the Cross-bearer. The Minister for Education then formally performed the opening ceremony. He was presented by the architect, Chevalier P. J. Sheehan, with a gold key, and his Lordship received from the architect a silver salver, as mementoes of the occasion.

Among the public representatives and other dignitaries present (in addition to those already named) were: Rev. F. C. Firebrace, M.A., Bourney, representing the Rector of Roscrea; Capt. J. Powell, Muinntir na Tire; Rev. Bro. Creedon, Nenagh; Miss Mary Meagher, Irish Countrywomen's Association; Messrs. J. B. O'Flanagan, Chief Inspector, Vocational Education Dept.; P. Fleming and S. Edwards, Inspectors; M. Collins, M.C.C.; W. Toohy, N.T.; P. Barry, U.D.C.; J. Devane, U.D.C.; Gerald Flynn, D. Kennedy, M.C.C.; C. Lucey, U.D.C.; J. Murphy, M.C.C.; M. Treacy, U.D.C.; T. Meagher, M.C.C.; James O'Meara, M.C.C.; Thomas Ryan, U.D.C.; Dr. Murray, Dr. Evers; Messrs. McManus, E. Spillane, James O'Dwyer, Chevalier Sheehan, and Daniel O'Meara.

Traffic was under the control of Supt. J. Carroll, Templemore, and Sergt. J. O'Reilly, Roscrea.

APEAL TO PARENTS

Informal addresses were given to the pupils in one of the classrooms after the blessing and opening ceremonies. Mr. T. J. McGrath, Chairman of the Committee, presided and introduced the speakers. Having spoken in Irish, Mr. McGrath said as chairman of the Committee it was his very pleasant duty to preside at the function. They had witnessed that morning the blessing of God being evoked on their new school by his Lordship the Bishop and its formal opening by the Minister for Education. The children of Roscrea had now excellent vocational training in beautiful surroundings available to them, and he would appeal to parents and pupils alike to take full advantage of the facilities provided. He hoped that there would always be a large enrolment of students in this fine school, and his appeal was to the people of Roscrea and surrounding districts to use the school to the full.

MOMENTOUS OCCASION

Most Rev. Dr. Rodgers, who spoke first in Irish, said that the opening of a school such as this was always a momentous and important occasion in the lives of the people of the locality, because from this school would go forth boys and girls—the fathers and mothers of future generations who would be trained in methods for the betterment of their people, in agriculture and in other technical aspects of life, and last but not least, trained in the methods of running a home, which was one of the most important things in life. He would ask the young people to take full advantage of the vocational training being provided for them in that school. He wondered if they always appreciated to the full nowadays the great advantages which could be reaped from such training. He was very pleased to bless that fine school in the historic parish of Roscrea, for whose people he always had a deep affection. He was glad to meet them there and he hoped that great work would be done in that school which stood on historic ground. He trusted that in addition to catering for their vocational needs the school would play its full part in the cultural advancement of their country. It was a fine building and he prayed God's blessing on its work.

THE MINISTER'S ADDRESS

General Mulcahy said: The last official occasion on which I had the pleasure of visiting North Tipperary Vocational Education Committee was the opening of the new school at Newport. I am happy to hear that, thanks to the enthusiasm of the people of Newport and in particular to the efforts of their esteemed pastor, Fr. Mulvihill, that school has already proved to be an outstanding success.

To-day in Roscrea, the picture is somewhat different. We are indeed opening a new building, but a school is something more than the walls in which it is housed, and under the new roof

you will simply be continuing an institution in which vocational education has long flourished. Historic though the old Ormond Castle may have been, after six centuries it could scarcely be considered a fitting home for a school.

In the new building the usual courses of instruction for the commercial and industrial needs of the area will be given as efficiently as ever, but nevertheless to-day is in many ways a milestone in the school's development. Sooner or later and, I should hope, sooner rather than



later, the school will for the first time be in a position to serve the special needs of the farming community as well as those of the townsfolk. I understand that a school of this kind usually has on its rolls pupils from a radius of five or six miles and since that is so it may well be called a rural vocational school. All of us have, therefore, a right to expect that the influence of this rural vocational school will radiate outwards into the home of every one of its pupils in such a way as to elevate and enrich the whole life of the area. Ireland's vocational schools have a function that is all their own. They should not be merely institutions where a little skill is acquired in certain subjects or crafts. Their function should in addition be on the one hand to be a mirror of their environment and on the other to vivify and enliven the spiritual, social and economic way of life of the countryside. How can these schools best fulfil that function? Firstly, of course, by the teachers and pupils doing honestly and well the daily duties to hand, whether those duties are concerned with the study of Irish, with woodwork or metalwork, rural science or domestic science, bookkeeping or typing or general subjects.

NO IVORY TOWER

If, however, the housewife is a true bean a' tigh, she will not be satisfied just with keeping the kitchen tidy, and similarly a vocational school is called upon to do more than a neat tidy job of daily work within its four walls. The vocational school which keeps itself to itself and becomes an "ivory tower" is failing in its duty to the community.

The teaching of Irish, for instance, should not confine itself to the conning of dry-as-dust grammatical rules. It should be an inspiration, as it was for those of my generation, informing our whole outlook and making us proudly conscious of the rock whence we were hewn. A vocational school, therefore, which in the teaching of Irish, limits itself to "talk and chalk" and of which the impact is not felt at every feis, at every scoraloicht and even at every crossroads gathering, is in some degree falling short of the ideal.

Similarly the teaching of rural science should not be merely the learning by rote from a book of a list of fungi or the like. Rural science in a vocational school should, by means of home project schemes—the raising of a bonham here or the cultivation of a garden orchard there, or whatever other schemes a progressive teacher may devise—penetrate into farm and field and haggard. If we are to have increased agricultural productivity, the first step in that direction is to begin with the boy or girl on the farm. Only through these can the necessary foundations be laid for a sound contact between farming and science.

NO BORDER

In that regard, I am happy to be able to tell you that, so far



Kneeling before the altar in the central nave of St. Peter's Basilica, Pope Pius XII prays for the newly beatified Pontiff, Innocent XI, during the afternoon rite marking the beatification of his 17th century predecessor. Pope Pius travelled from his summer residence to the Vatican to attend the solemn ceremonies, at which 15 cardinals, 100 bishops and the entire diplomatic corps to the Holy See were present along with 30,000 pilgrims.

REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY One And A Quarter Mill Adumbrated For North Tipperary Scheme

The regional water supply, where by a piped supply would be available in North Tipperary at an estimated cost of 1 1/2 million pounds, was discussed at a special meeting of the County Council on Tuesday on a motion by Mr. J. B. O'Driscoll. It was agreed on a vote of the Council that the scheme would be tentatively submitted to the Department of Local Government for their views on it.

PEOPLE WOULD SAY THEY WERE CRAZY

Mr. M. Collins supported Mr. Kennedy and said that the Co. Council was already bankrupt to the extent of one million pounds raised in the Local Loans Funds, and if this scheme went through it would add another 1 1/2 millions to the total of their big debt, and

Mr. O'Driscoll proposed that the Co. Council take the necessary steps to implement the proposed scheme of rural water supplies as propounded by the Co. Engineer in his report. He said he did not think there would be any need to recommend this proposal to the Council as they had already conveyed their thanks to the Co. Engineer and his staff for the elaborate report they had made, together with a detailed map. They had discussed the scheme fully at the August meeting and there was a suggestion made they should defer a decision for the attendance of the County Manager. He suggested that this was a case for taking the long view of, say, 15 to 20 years. There was no need to stress the need for a clean water supply in every house as far as they possibly could supply it. It was one of the essentials of life, and of water and fresh air they had plenty of it in this country. The Co. Engineer had given them an idea how it could be done over a long term programme of 20 years, and he thought their programme should be covered in ten years. They could ask the Co. Manager to submit the scheme to the Department and ask for their provisional approval. If this was received they could get the Co. Engineer to devise the scheme as soon as the finances would allow. He knew he was forcing an open door and that all the members of the Council were enthusiastic about it. They all realised the necessity for a clean water supply in every household, and he proposed that they proceed with the scheme.

WOULD BREAK THE COUNTRY

Mr. D. Kennedy moved that the question of providing a water supply be referred back. He said he did not hear anyone looking for this scheme and the only one who was for it was Mr. O'Driscoll. He had moved that this scheme be gone on with and it was going to break the country. A scheme like this in a small country like theirs was something that they should not go ahead at all with. At the present time how could they afford two million in money. It was estimated to cost 1 1/2 million pounds but by the time it was finished it would cost an extra half million. The people would have to pay for a scheme that they did not want at all.

Now, with the advent of the rural electrification scheme the farmers who wanted water could provide themselves with an electric pump and they could sink their own wells. The suggested scheme was going to cost them something like 3/- in the £ over a period, and he did not see why they should burden the people like this. It was madness, pure and simple, added Mr. Kennedy.