

The Record Reign Fountain.

Turning on the Water.

On Saturday afternoon the Marble Fountain, subscribed for by the citizens to mark the Queen's Record Reign, was formally handed over to the charge of the Municipal Council. A full description of the fountain, which has been erected at the intersection of Moleworth and Magellan streets, has already appeared in our columns. Despite the threatening weather between two and three hundred assembled to see the water turned on. Members of the Lismore Band were present and played several selections.

Dr F. G. Connor, on behalf of the Committee, formally handed over the fountain. In doing so he first referred to the reign, which had attained the length of years making it a record reign in English history. He pointed out the difference in the conditions which existed when the reign began in 1837 and now. In 1837 a citizen was hampered by many obstacles. Imprisonment for debt was the rule then, and flogging in the army and navy prevailed. Only a few had a vote, and there was everywhere a revolutionary tendency. During her Majesty's reign many of these abuses were done away with. Flogging was done away with, now every man had a vote, and the hours of labour had been shortened. Improvements had also taken place in all directions. Steamers were now running where at-seas were to be unknown, and it was hardly possible to enumerate the benefits attained during the reign of Queen Victoria. Those of them born the last 50 years were apt to forget these benefits. Since the Queen ascended the throne the Empire had been increased immensely, over three and a half million square miles of territory had been added, inhabited by eight million inhabitants. That was a big slice of territory to be added to the Empire during her reign. Four great nations had been added to the Empire. We prided ourselves on being a nation, then there was New Zealand and the great nation of Canada and that of South Africa. Steamers, telegraphs, freedom, which includes these things practically, marked the reign of the Queen. It was thought by the Queen's advisers, notably the Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, that there should be something to mark the sixtieth year of the Queen's reign, not simply because it was a record reign, but because other countries were holding their heads a little bit high, and it was said England was being out-run. Germany, France, and Russia were advancing all along the line. The idea of the Record Reign celebration was based to a certain extent to show for its countries, by bringing representatives from all parts of the Empire to London, the union and bonds existing between those parts and the mother country. This was done, and it was shown England was the great England that ever she was. The people in Lismore thought they were no small beer, and although a small community distant from other places of importance, in loyalty and national feeling they were second to none, and they determined not to be left out altogether. To show their loyalty they decided on having what was termed a "bug worry" for the children,—and the day passed off very well—and to erect some memorial to show their children, and those to come after them, that they were loyal subjects. A committee was formed and money raised, and the result was the memorial before them. He did not wish them to criticize it, the committee knew of its faults. If they had had money enough they might have erected a golden image a hundred feet high, with an electric light on the top. What they had done they considered worthy of the town, and they had spent the money in the best way they could. They knew the fountain had many faults. There were wise men among them who would criticize it, and had done so, and there were boys who knew things that were done wrong and who could do better, but none of them knew anything that the Committee does not know. He had been told the top had a tendency to incline to Mr. Nesbitt's, but if it was not straight it was straight enough. The drinking fountain was a new public house with

if it was not straight it was straight enough. The drinking fountain was a new public house, with this difference—drinks were free to all. Before handing it over he would like to say they hoped at all times, as long as they were distributing water, the Council would take every pains to give a good supply and pure. As they were all aware the water comes from the creek, a short distance above the town, which, with the increasing population, the danger of contamination was daily increasing. The drainage of the town, too, went into the river, and there was danger of it being carried up to the source of supply. Besides this there were crematories above the works, and cane camps, besides an increasing population, so that every pains should be taken to prevent the water supply being contaminated. He suggested a weekly inspection for, say 10 miles, so that all dead animals might be promptly removed. It was also necessary they should have filter beds, and this at an early date. These were matters for the Council to consider. His duty that afternoon was to hand over to the Mayor, for the Council, the fountain, and in doing so he asked him to preserve it from injury by lighting it carefully at night, and to supply it with a good, fresh, and pure supply of water. It would thus be not only ornamental but useful. (Applause.)

The Mayor (Alderman O'Flynn) also briefly alluded to the occasion which led to the erection of the fountain. With reference to Dr. Connor's remarks about pure water the aldermen had not been idle on this matter. They knew the day was not far distant when the present supply would not be what it now is, but polluted. To get ready for that time the Council had taken steps to get a reserve of 4000 acres 13 miles from Lismore in the high country on the Tweed Road. This had now been granted, and as the locality was land unsuitable for settlement and carboniferous country, when the occasion arises they would find men in the Council capable of dealing with it. He could only say on behalf of the Council, he accepted the fountain from the committee, who have had the custody of it to the present time. He guaranteed, no matter who was in the Council, it would be jealously guarded and receive all the attention it deserves. It commemorates a very great event in the history of the country, and on behalf of the citizens he thanked the subscribers for the very handsome and beautiful fountain. As to what had been said about finding fault with the fountain, if it met all the requirements of a drinking fountain it would answer all that it was intended for. On behalf of the citizens he accepted the fountain and promised it would be looked after.

At this stage the water was turned on and there was a scramble to have first drink.

Alderman M'LENNAN proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman and the members of the committee, who had brought this movement to so successful an issue. It marked another advance in modern civilization in Lismore, and thirsty souls could now quench their thirst "without money and without price."

Mr. J. M. DUNS, in a humorous speech, returned thanks on behalf of the committee. They had done what they could to bring the matter to a successful issue. They would have liked to have seen a big monument of gold to commemorate the occasion, but that was not the committee's fault, rather the fault of the contributors. He touched on one or two matters not referred to by Dr. Connor, showing the difference existing in the years 1837 and 1897. In conclusion, he urged that something should be done as filtering the water in order that it might be supplied clear and pure. This would be money well spent.

Cheers were given for Mr. Jones who had undertaken the work of erection, to which Mr. Jones replied, and the proceedings terminated.

A MISARRIAGE OF JUSTICE IN FRANCE.—Our Paris correspondent writes:—With regard to judicial errors, and while it is claimed that Dreyfus may possibly be the victim of such, the Court of

judicial errors, and while it is claimed that Dreyfus may possibly be the victim of such, the Court of Appeal is considering the revision of a sentence of life penal servitude passed on a man named Vaut in 1861 for a crime of which it now appears he was quite innocent. It is only within the last two years, however, that the law would permit a re-hearing of the case; legal punctilio and technicality has stood in the way of doing justice until at this late date, when it can only do justice to his memory, the man himself having long since passed beyond the jurisdiction of the courts. A lifetime sacrificed to legal frills and fustian. In 1859, Haudin, Governor of Cayenne, where Vaut was imprisoned, firmly convinced of the man's innocence, petitioned for a new trial. Every guardian of the prisoner at Cayenne was convinced in the same conclusion, but the magistrates to whom the appeal was sent, rejected it, apparently on the grounds (stated in his official report) that the "politics of the prisoner were detestable."

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