

PORT CYGNET HALL.

Laying of Foundation Stone

Ceremony Performed by Warden Davies.

Congratulatory Speeches.

The foundation stone of the Municipal Hall in course of erection at Lovett was laid by the Warden (Mr Arthur Davies) on Thursday afternoon, in the presence of a very representative gathering of citizens, including the resident clergymen and the members of the council.

Having placed in a small recess beneath the stone a sealed bottle containing copies of the newspapers of that date, the Warden directed that the stone be lowered into position. This was done and he thereupon declared it "well and truly laid." Proceeding he said:—"Ladies and gentleman: We have to-day taken another important onward step along the path of progress—an important step towards the consummation of a great social reform in this district. If we wish our people to be contented with their lot, and to keep pace with other districts in various parts of the State, then we must give them the same facilities for social amusement and intellectual improvement as are provided elsewhere—(hear, hear.) We all know that environment all the world over had a good deal to do with the formation of character, and it should be our ardent desire that our people should ever be looking upward and onward. It is our duty to awaken within them and to foster a healthy ambition. In every district you will find a few croakers who consider a few shillings extra taxation before the interests of human life or human happiness. But it is our duty as councillors to lead in all those things that we honestly consider are for the betterment of the people—(applause.) If we were to wait till we got a push behind from the ratepayers, in many instances we would not move before the crack of doom. The view I have also held is that councillors should represent the whirlwind rather than the weathercock. We only have to look at the

represent the whirlwind rather than the weathercock. We only have to look at the reforms that have been carried out since the council had been in existence. They include the establishment of a sanitary service, a hospital, the lighting of the town, and now this fine town hall that is to be. Is there anyone who will argue that every one of these things is not a distinct advantage to the district? Although we have done much, a good deal yet remains to be accomplished before we pay off the arrears of past apathy. We have yet to provide a pure water supply for this town, while public abattoirs also have to be erected. These are two things that vitally affect the whole of the people, and stand easily first in point of importance—(hear, hear). When pushing these schemes forward we will, of course, come into conflict with those few people, of whom I have already spoken, who are afraid of a few shillings extra taxation. I would point out, however, that we have a district that is specially blessed by Nature. Bounded, as we are, by the Huon river on the west and the D'Entrecasteau Channel on the east, we have no snow-clad mountains intervening to spring cold snaps upon us. We have a harbour second to none in Tasmania with deep water almost from shore to shore. It is one that the British fleet could manoeuvre in safety. Then our soil has been especially blessed, possessing, according to the scientific reports made upon it, all the constituents essential for the successful growing of apples. In view of these facts, if the district does not progress, then the people themselves are to blame—(applause). It is the clear duty of all those occupying leading public positions to urge the people to be enterprising, and to make the best use of our rich natural resources—(loud applause)."

Hearty cheers were then given for Warden and Mrs Davies.

At the invitation of the Warden those in attendance then adjourned to the council-chamber, where they were lavishly entertained, their wants being liberally attended to by Mrs Davies, assisted by Mrs Edgar and Miss Davis. The usual loyal toast having been honoured,

Rev Father O'Flynn proposed the health of the Warden and councillors of Port Cygnet. He said he had been looking forward for a long time to the day when the foundation-stone of the new hall would be laid, because he recognised that a hall such as that being erected would be a great boon to the

erected would be a great boon to the people of the district. Not only would it give the people the required facilities for spending their evenings in healthy amusement, but would be the centre round which the progress of the district might be said to revolve. It gave him very great pleasure to propose the health of the Warden and councillors, all of whom had worked hard to promote the progress of the Port Cygnet district as a whole—(applause.)

The toast was drunk with musical honours, and Councillor E. Baldwin, in responding, said it was a change to hear such nice things said about councillors. It was generally their lot to have abuse heaped upon them.

Rev. Hooker proposed the toast "Success to the new building." He emphasised the importance of having a hall adequate for its requirements. It was essential, not only for the amusement but for the education of the inhabitants.

The toast was heartily received, and Councillor R. Harvey, in response, referred to the advancement made by the district, stating that it was within his recollection when the whole of the apples grown in Port Cygnet were bought by one man. They numbered 800 cases, whereas last year, although the crop was an unusually light one, over 300,000 bushel cases of fruit were sent away from there. That, he thought, indicated very satisfactory progress.

Other toasts honoured were "The architects and contractors," proposed in felicitous terms by Rev Mr Goldsworthy; "The ladies," proposed by Dr Wade; and "The press," proposed by Councillor Harris.