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COLLEGE. [ARTICLE]

THE CHRISTIAN BROTHERS' COLLEGE.

## Laying the Corner-stone—Oration by the Very Rev. Father Prendergast.

Pursuant to the published announcement, the corner-stone of the new Christian Brothers' College was laid yesterday afternoon. The college building is located on the southwest corner of Twelfth and K streets, just outside of the business portion of the city, and as pleasant a location as could well be wished for. The building fronts flush on K street. As yet only the brick basement and the frame and rustic work of the lower story are built—but the work on the upper stories and finishing off the entire building, will be prosecuted with a vigor characteristic of those who have the management of it. The building will be a frame, with a frontage of one hundred feet. It will be three stories high, with a seven-foot basement. The depth will be sixty feet. The college grounds run back to the alley, almost, and are 120x 60 feet, by measurement. The building promises to be an ornament to the city, in point of architectural beauty, and with our numerous other educational institutions, will be a credit to the town. The college is built under the auspices of the Christian Brothers, and its design is to educate young men in the collegiate branches, without regard to creed. Although it is to be a Catholic college, it is not designed to be sectarian.

Long before the hour appointed for the exercises to commence, the vicinity of the college, and the grounds, were crowded with interested spectators, and they continued to come until the exercises had commenced. A stand had been placed in the rear end of the lot, facing the building, and seats were provided in front of it for the accommodation of the ladies. The seat room, however, was not ample enough, and the lot and sidewalk was filled with men, women and children. A procession of children marched up from the church, immediately followed by the members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (about one hundred in number), under the command of County Delegate J. J. McAnion. The members were in regalia, and they grouped in front and on either side of the stand. There were present on the stand the Very Rev. Father Prendergast, rector of St. Mary's Cathedral, San Francisco; Brother Justin, President of St. Mary's College; Rev. Fathers Scanlan and Callahan, of this city; Father Mulvihill, of Folsom; and John S. Barrett, John W. Armstrong and U. A. Colet.

Mr. Barrett, President of the Day, called the assemblage to order, and after a few explanatory remarks, he introduced the Very Rev. Father Prendergast, who delivered the following oration:

### Oration of the Very Rev. Father Prendergast.

Ladies and Gentlemen: This occasion is one of especial interest to all the people of Sacramento. It is almost necessary that in every large town or city there should, in addition to the ordinary appliances for imparting a good education, be a college for the purpose of imparting to young men a knowledge of the higher sciences, and to afford to parents an opportunity to give their sons a collegiate education without subjecting them to the necessity of sending those sons afar. But apart from the especial benefits which the people of Sacramento look for and expect from this institution, the founding of this college is an event of interest to all intelligent people. To my mind there is no undertaking, at least there are few undertakings, of greater importance to any people than the establishing in their midst of a college under the guidance and management of the Christian Brothers. I take it that the importance of any institution is in proportion to the influence it is destined to exert for good upon mankind. The higher the interest affected by it the more extensive and enduring its results, the nobler is the character of the institution and the stronger its claims upon the fostering sympathies of those it is intended to bless. Judged by this criterion, tried by this test, it seems to me that the college, which is to rise on this spot towers in importance above above all of the other creations of your enterprise and intelligence. For what are you assembled, my friends, on this occasion? You are assembled to lay the foundation stone of a college; you are assembled to lay the foundation stone of a college under the control and management of the Christian Brothers. First, then, you are assembled to lay the foundation stone of a college. Now I think that the most ardent votary of education is unable to grasp the full significance of that word. What is education? What are its powers and what are its results? Take the little child that has just been placed in the world. How feeble it is in its physical life. How void of thought is its soul. How narrow and contracted are its desires. But a few years pass away and that child assumes the majestic mien of a man. The light of knowledge rescues his soul. His sympathies become universal and his aspirations infinite. What, I ask you, has produced this wonderful transformation of that little child? What has spanned the deep and wide chasm that separates the child from the man? The answer is, education. Again look at education in its results and you will find evidences of its wonderful power. Man considered in himself, viewed by his earthly surroundings, measured by his physical existence, seems a very small and despicable creature, yet how wonderful are his achievements. He can make the wind and the storm his servants and the sun his light and the earth his possession.

values and the very heights and quick intelligences of his thought. He can ride over the billows of the sea and fly over the mountains in a chariot of fire. He can descend into the very heart of the earth and read there the story of bygone days. He can ascend to heaven and follow the planets in their paths and walk amid the stars. He can penetrate even into the unseen world and bow with the angels before the very throne of the Almighty. Whence comes this almost infinite power? The answer again is, education. If you leave your children wealth, you leave them a very uncertain inheritance. The blight may destroy it, the dishonest man may steal it, the vicissitudes of the world may take it away, the hand of the incendiary may burn it, the storm may bury it in the deep sea; but how different if you leave your children the inheritance of a good education. The treasure of a good education is imperishable because it is lodged in the inaccessible fortress of the soul, and it remains with us forever to yield us comfort amid life's sorrows and tribulations, to light our path in darkness, and to enable us to stand unconquered over the very ruins of our hopes. But, my friends, when I speak thus of education and expatiate upon its wonderful power, I mean by education that process by which all our God-given faculties are perfected. There are persons who understand by education the cultivation of the intellect, the imparting of scientific knowledge and who look upon this knowledge, the knowledge of the rudimentary sciences and of the higher sciences as the supreme good of life, as an infallible panacea, the remedy for all the miseries and ills of humanity; but the experience of the world shows that there is a higher education. In reality the mere cultivation of the mind by imparting scientific knowledge, at most only elevates man from the lower to the higher sphere of the social state. Every sphere in life has its own dangers and temptations, and the learned man, in his high state, although he looks down perhaps with scorn upon his less favored fellow beings, has perils and temptations to withstand, as we all unfortunately know, as well as the illiterate man in the lower state. In effect we know that a mere secular knowledge is not all we want. Are all those illiterate persons who darken their minds with the fumes of intoxication? Are they all illiterate who break the vows made before the altar of God, break the hearts of their partners in life, and mangle the innocencies of their children with shame and confusion? Are they all illiterate who live to steal and plunder, and build magnificent dwellings on the ruins of the humble cottages of orphans and widows? Were they all illiterate persons who recently murdered in cold blood, in the most enlightened city in the world, innocent citizens, and plotted destruction unparalleled in the annals of mankind? No, these

Communists were not illiterate; they were able to read; they had their newspapers, but their knowledge drove

them with terrific power against their country, their religion and their God. Therefore I contend that something more is necessary for the perfection of man, as an intelligent and responsible being, than the possession of mere scientific knowledge, the mere cultivation of his brain, and in order to make this clear to you, let me give you an illustration. You know that all things live and are developed in accordance with the laws of life, given to them by the Creator. There is nothing from the smallest particle of clay to the mighty sun; from the tiny herb which is almost invisible to the high and gigantic oak or cedar; from the worm upon which we tread to man, and from man up to the angels; there is nothing in the wide domain of nature, in all creation, that has not received from God the constitution of its life. The foundation of our glorious republic is based upon a constitution drawn up by our fathers. The right of existence of every creature is the constitution given to it by Almighty God. It is its code of laws. Let those laws be observed and every creature develops, but let them be violated and it dies, or causes death. Take as an illustration the lightning. Respect the laws that govern it, and the lightning of the storm will be obedient to you, and at your bidding will come down innocuous to the ground, but defy it and ignore the constitution and the laws given to it, and as it in revenge it will hurl one of its bolts down and crush you to the ground. What are the laws of man's existence? What are the conditions of his development and his perfection? Man has a physical being, an intellectual being, a moral being and a religious being. He has a physical being because he has a physical life. He has an intellectual being because he is capable of thought. He has a moral being because he distinguishes right and wrong. He has a religious being because he recognizes God as his father and heaven as his home. Therefore, guided by nature, taught by nature's laws, I contend that that alone is true education which is adapted to the complex constitution of man and which develops all his faculties. That consideration, my friends, brings me to the fact that the institution, the cornerstone of which you are assembled to place is to be governed, directed and managed by the Christian Brothers. Now who are these Christian Brothers, whence have they come; what is their mission in life, and what is their work? The Christian Brothers owe their existence to a generous idea, or probably I should say, the heavenly inspiration of a noble son of France. A hundred years ago, or perhaps two hundred, I forget the exact time, a generous-hearted son of France, looking around him and seeing ignorance prevailing on every side, conceived the sublime idea of organizing a body of men who would devote themselves exclusively to the rooting out of ig-

norance from the human mind and imparting knowl-  
 edge. But he felt conv need that without organization  
 his object could not be attained. Accordingly he in-  
 stituted a society of the Christian Brothers; but there is  
 a principle of power in the Brotherhood which does not  
 spring from their organization only. What this  
 principle is I could tell you briefly by ap-  
 pealing to the inspired page, but I prefer  
 to do it by another, though a circuitous way.  
 The speaker went on and referred to the men who, in  
 the interest of science, leave their homes, families and  
 friends, expose their lives and expend their resources;  
 and of the honors accorded to them by the universal  
 judgment of mankind for their self-sacrificing labors,  
 and the benefits they confer on their fellow men. He  
 instanced the various efforts made to pierce the Arctic  
 ice circle to discover the open polar sea. With these  
 men, he maintained, the Christian Brothers were to be  
 classed, inasmuch as they leave home and kindred, and  
 vow themselves irrevocably, without any earthly com-  
 pensation, not to the examination of a scientific theo-  
 ry, but to the practical and vital work of education.  
 The speaker then referred to the advent of the first com-  
 pany of Christian Brothers to these shores, contrasting  
 with those who came over the waves of the Pacific, over  
 the mountains and plains to garner the riches of our  
 soil and take the gold from our mountain vaults, the de-  
 voted men, who were led to us, not to take, but  
 to give; not to take our precious ores, but to give  
 us treasures better than silver or gold. In conclusion  
 he said: You have to-day planted in the soil of Sacra-  
 mento, a germ, not from the tree of knowledge of good  
 and evil, but from the Tree of Life. Its growth requires  
 time. Only gradually the rising sun warms and vivifies  
 all nature; the rain from Heaven pierces the hard  
 crust of the earth, and reaches the hidden laboratory  
 of vegetation; the corn grows, flowers bloom; the trees  
 are clothed in their vernal raiment; the body extends;  
 the mind expands, and the child attains the physical  
 and intellectual dimensions of the man. We patient  
 then, and in due time this germ will become a mighty  
 tree and bear abundant fruit for the moral and intel-  
 lectual life of your sons.

At the close of Father Prendergast's remarks, Brother  
 Justin was introduced, and he made a few exceedingly  
 interesting, happy and appropriate remarks. The  
 ceremony of laying the corner stone was then per-  
 formed in front of the building, and the gathering dis-  
 persed with heartfelt wishes that the College will be a  
 success.