

HIBERNIAN-AUSTRALASIAN CATHOLIC BENEFIT SOCIETY.

OPENING OF THE MOUNT IDA BRANCH.

We take from the 'Mount Ida Chronicle' the following particulars of the opening of the branch of the H.A.C.B.S. in that district:—

A branch of the Hibernian-Australasian Catholic Benefit Society was opened at Naseby on the evening of Monday week by Mr Fred. J. Bunny, the delegate appointed by St. Joseph's Branch No. 78, Daneidin. The ceremony was opened by the Rev. Mr Royer with prayer. Mr Bunny, after reading the authority he had received from Melbourne to open the branch, delivered the following address:—

Brethren,—We are assembled on this occasion for the performance of an interesting and important duty, the formal opening of a new Branch of the H.A.C.B.S. It is by such means the benefits of the Society will be widely spread throughout Australia and New Zealand, and its principles more fully understood. The object of our society in the first place is by mutual co-operation to provide against those casualties of life which all are subject to in a corporeal manner, and further the advancement of our lives in the paths of virtue, wisdom, and happiness, by promoting the social, moral, and intellectual condition of its members. He who would become a brother of this new branch, must prove his fitness by submitting his character to the scrutiny of those with whom he seeks to associate, and if that character will not bear a strict test, he is at once rejected; nor can any branch neglect the solemn duty of testing the character of its candidate without sinking into degradation, and endangering its own existence. In opening this Branch, another link in the social chain of the Society is about to be accomplished, and those who become members of it will take upon themselves a share of the responsibility connected with it. The ruling power of the Society, its Executive Directory, in sanctioning the establishment of this Branch, does so on the express condition that the principle of subjection to the supreme power of the Society will always be recognised, and that no deviation from its laws and regulations will at any time take place. The government of our association being elective, a participation in its management is open to all, but power without responsibility will not be permitted, or office without ability and integrity tolerated; these principles are no less enforced in its individual branches, than in its supreme government. Now, my brethren, having called your attention to the aspirations of the Society, I have only to say—Remember and keep the instructions and promises of your initiation, and may you ever be favored with the blessings expressed through its motto of "Faith, Hope, and Charity." The dispensation was then read and the delegate declared as follows:—By authority of the dispensation now read, and in virtue of my prerogative, I do hereby declare this branch No. 74. of the H.A.C.B.S. duly opened, and legally established for the carrying out of all the objects and purposes of the said Society, now in operation, or hereafter to be adopted. The initiation of the members was then proceeded with after which the following officers were elected and duly installed—President, Joseph Kealy; Vice-President, Bernard Gordon; Secretary, P. M. Moroney; Treasurer, Michael Lennane; Warden, John Clancy; Guardian, James Byrne. The delegate after delivering a closing charge to the Society spoke as follows: Mr President, Vice-President, Officers, and Brothers—I congratulate you upon the opening of a branch of the Hibernian Australasian Catholic Benefit Society in Naseby. The benefits derivable from it are too numerous to mention, one great blessing, however, to be derived from it is that it will be the means of bringing the Catholics closer and closer together, and then again you will be able to spend many pleasant evenings at your fortnightly or monthly meetings. Bye-and-bye when you grow richer and stronger, you might have a library in connection with the Society—the winter evenings would then be spent as they should be, viz., in improving the mind. I am doing my utmost to open branches of the Society in Invercargill and Lawrence, and I am determined not to rest until branches are opened in these places. I may tell you that the Catholics of Christchurch have been communicating with me regarding the establishment of branches in the Canterbury Province, and as I have supplied the necessary information, I trust shortly to hear of branches being opened in all the important districts in the Province. Gentlemen,—Supposing I live to a ripe old age, and that it is the will of Providence that I should plod along without benefiting in any way my fellow Catholics, yet I shall cast my dim eyes with feelings of pride upon the different branches of the Hibernian-Australasian Catholic Benefit Society, and the thought of the part that I have played in ushering them into Otago will make me to say to myself "Well, after all, my life has not been altogether worthless!" Mr President and Brothers,—Let me again congratulate you upon the inauguration of your branch. I sincerely wish you every success, and I trust the 21st July will ever be regarded as a red letter day by the Catholics of Naseby. I take this opportunity of thanking the Rev. Mr Royer for the deep interest he has taken in the Society. I can assure you that had it not been for your good clergyman, despite my arrival in Naseby, I could not have opened the Society. I am sure, my brothers, that this branch will grow and flourish, because it has been opened by him with prayer, and he kindly intends to close it with the benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament. The ceremony was then closed by the Rev. Mr Royer with the benediction.

The brethren afterwards adjourned to Cogan's Melbourne Hotel, where refreshments in the shape of cake, wizes, fruits, and confections were served up in tempting style, and in abundance. The Rev. Father Royer was in the chair, and the newly elected President of the Society, Mr Joseph Kealy, in the vice-chair.

The President said that as the Society was religious one, he would propose the toast of "His Holiness Pope Pius the IX."

Rev. Father Royer, in referring to the toast just drunk, hoped that the brethren would attend strictly to the duties imposed on them in connection with this society, and trusted that, as true Catholics, they would exert themselves to fulfil the duties expected of them.

The President next gave the "Queen and Royal family." Drunk with all the honors.

Mr Gordon said the Queen was the greatest monarch that ever sat on the English throne. He had served her Majesty on the battlefield, and would do so again if occasion required it.

Recitation—"The last moments of Montrose."—Mr Bunny. The President next gave the "Health of Mr Bunny," with the usual accompaniment of "He's a jolly good fellow."

Mr Bunny thanked them for the warm and hearty reception given him. Since he arrived among them he had met with the greatest hospitality from one and all.

Song—"The Minstrel Boy," by Mr Wilson.

Mr Bunny proposed "The Kindred Societies," coupled with the name of Mr Brookes.

Mr Brookes, in responding, said that since he had become a member of the order of Oddfellows, he had seen nothing but good fellowship existing, and he was convinced the Hibernian Society would not be an exception to the rule. He expressed the wish that all the various societies in Naseby would act cordially together, and that harmony and good fellowship would prevail among all classes.

Song—"Oh! Erin my country," by Mr J. Kealy.

The President next gave "The Municipality of Naseby," coupled with the name of the Mayor-elect.

The Mayor-elect, Mr L. W. Busch, replied.

Song—"The Anchor's Weighed," by Mr Wilson.

Mr Bunny gave "Success to the Naseby Branch of the H.A.C.B.S.," coupled with the name of Mr Moroney. He hoped that the members would exert themselves to carry out faithfully the objects of the Society, and that in doing so they would benefit themselves and be a credit to the order.

Mr Moroney replied, and said that although it was the last branch of the parent tree that had shot out, yet he trusted it would not be the least.

Song—"Ladies' Eyes Around, Boys,"—Mr Gordon.

"The Ladies," by the President, was responded to by Mr Busch.

Recitation—"The Spanish Champion"—by Mr Bunny.

"The Host and Hostess," by Mr Brookes, was responded to by Mr Cogan.

Song—"Annie Laurie"—by Mr Brookes.

"The Rev. Father Royer," by Mr Busch. The Rev gentleman replied.

Song—"The Shamrock"—by Mr Lennane.

"The Press," coupled with the name of Mr Wilson, by the President. Mr Wilson replied.

Several other toasts and songs followed, and the meeting, which was a most agreeable one, broke up at an early hour.

OPENING PUBLIC LIBRARIES ON SUNDAY.

THE 'Boston Pilot,' on a petition to open the Public Libraries on Sunday comments as follows:—While we disagree with our Protestant brethren as to the ground on which we base our observance of the Sunday, and as to the degree of strictness with which it should be observed, we certainly cannot see that any particular good can come from the opening of our Public Libraries on Sunday. The fact is, and men like Josiah Quincy, who are bold enough to speak out their honest convictions openly proclaim it, our Public Libraries are beginning to have a demoralizing tendency, especially on the young. The shelves are filled with all the novels of the times, good, bad, and indifferent; these are given out to applicants without any discrimination, and at the counter of the library, as at the bar of the rumshop, that which tastes the strongest is most called for. Let anyone examine the report of the books given out, and he will begin to doubt whether such culture as our people, especially our young people, get from books taken from our Public Libraries be so good, and whether there is not need to adopt some precautionary measure other than merely keeping the Libraries closed on Sunday. If these Libraries contained only good reading, we should find no fault with opening them on Sunday; but as the reading matter most called for is such as we cannot approve we are afraid that the opening of these Libraries on Sunday "is" [here it quotes the words of the petition] "fraught with peril to the best interests of the community."

The London 'Universe' reads the following in the 'Brussels Courier.' It is well worthy of the attention of those English statesmen, who have shown themselves so shallow as to approve of the persecution of the Catholic Church in Russia:—The ancient president of the ministry, the Baron Manteuffel (a Protestant) said the other day in the Chamber of Peers (protesting against the new iniquitous laws)—"They will ruin the principle of authority, already so weak; the day is near at hand when the royal power itself will be questioned. I implore the Almighty to avert our danger, for otherwise the question will not be "priests or royalty," but "monarchy or the petroleumers."—All men of thought and who have a love for their country are coming round to the judgment enunciated long ago by the Church. But their waking up to this wisdom is somewhat late. Heaven grant it may not be too late.

A SIGNIFICANT remark connected with Ireland is mentioned in the last report of the Civil Service Commissioners. The Commissioners say—"It may not be uninteresting to note that there is a great difference in the amount of success achieved by the candidates for situations in the Excise of the three kingdoms, more than one-half of the successful competitors having been examined in Ireland, less than one-third in England, and less than one-tenth in Scotland; and further, that while the proportion of prizes won to candidates sent up was in England not quite 1 out of 9, and in Scotland less than 1 in 12, in Ireland it amounted to somewhat more than 1 out of 6." If these are the facts at present, what would Ireland do were her sons once placed on an equality as regards educational facilities and advantages with the English and Scotch competitors?

The Catholics of Wichita, Ledgwick Co., Kansas, have bought the Presbyterian Church of that place, and dedicated it to the honor of St. Aloysius. Father Lumberg, the pastor, has to attend the whole south-western part of Kansas.