

St. Vincent De Paul Society, Dunedin.

The annual meeting of the ladies' branch of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, Dunedin, was held in St. Joseph's Hall on Monday evening. The Rev. Father Coffey, Adm., presided, and there was a good attendance.

The following report and balance sheet were presented to the meeting:—

In presenting the twenty-third annual report, the committee says it considered it a first and paramount duty to return its sincere thanks to all who have in any way, whether at the annual appeal or during the year, supplied the necessary funds and goods that have enabled it to do so much necessary work.

During the year the work of St. Vincent de Paul has not been allowed to relax; everything possible has been done to alleviate the wants of poor people and render their condition more endurable whenever brought under the committee's notice. Our charity (say the committee) is not confined to the Catholic poor alone. All, irrespective of creed, receive who by misfortune require the society's help. Its thanks are specially due to his Lordship the Bishop, the clergy, the nuns of the Good Shepherd, Sisters of Mercy (South Dunedin), Messrs. Callan and Gallaway, Dr. O'Neill, Dr. Hastings, Mr. Cummings (of the Patients and Prisoners' Aid Society), Mrs. Ansell (secretary of the Society for the Protection of Women and Children), Adjutant Duff, U.S.S. Company, Huddart-Parker Company, police authorities, and subscribing members.

General Summary.—Forty meetings were held; 10 children sent to St. Mary's (Nelson), seven girls to St. Vincent de Paul (South Dunedin), eight women to Mount Magdala, one girl to friends in Auckland, one girl to friends on the West Coast, five infants were sent to the Karitane Home. The society has had 11 children baptised. Sixty grocery orders were given out and 61 coal orders. A great quantity of made-up clothing has been distributed, 15 pairs of new boots, 113 yards flannelette, 30 yards flannel, 82 yards dress material, 6 pairs blankets, etc.

The society has 120 honorary members and nine active members.

BALANCE SHEET.

To Balance in	Expenditure.
bank, July, 1907 £28 4 7	By Groceries ... £17 17 0
„ Donations ... 27 17 0	„ Coal 23 19 4
„ Interest ... 0 5 5	„ Drapery 35 9 10
„ Poor box ... 9 12 0	„ Boots 5 12 6
„ Subscriptions ... 34 15 9	„ Telephone ... 5 0 0
„ Haeremai Com- mittee ... 5 5 0	„ Railway fares ... 2 3 4
„ Church collec- tion 58 13 0	„ U.S.S. Co. and Huddart-Parker 12 15 6
	„ Offerings, Mt. Magdala, etc. 6 11 0
	„ Urgent board ... 8 11 9
	„ Sundries — Cab hire, etc. ... 1 14 0
	„ Furniture ... 3 7 0
	„ Balance in hand 41 11 6
£164 12 9	£164 12 9

Rev. Father Coffey, in moving the adoption of the report and balance sheet, said the society had now been in existence for a considerable number of years, during which time it had done a great deal of good work in a quiet and unostentatious manner—in fact there were many in Dunedin who did not know of its existence. For years it was composed entirely of ladies of the congregation, but for the last couple of years they had started a men's society in connection with the work. As a matter of historic fact, the society was originally composed of men, and that was the case in several places at the present time. The work of the society was not confined to assisting any one denomination; it was purely a charitable institution, carried on entirely by the laity. The work of the society in Dunedin had been practically left to the women, who, it was recognised, could do it much better than the men. They did good work among the children whom they took from bad surroundings and placed in homes where they were well looked after and properly brought up. Then there was the work among the fathers and mothers, in whose homes poverty reigned. Another branch of the society's work was amongst fallen girls, who were taken away from their evil surroundings and placed in homes where they would be well looked after, and given a chance to redeem themselves. The work of the society was as extensive as charity

itself, and he had nothing but praise for those who were engaged in it. The president (Mrs. Jackson) had a very difficult task, and it required a woman of great patience and a very tender heart to fill the position. He read some time ago the report of the work done by the society in Australia last year, and from this report he learned that it distributed a sum of £10,000 in charity in twelve months. In Sydney the society supports a home where 120 fallen boys are maintained without any State assistance. Some years ago the Government contributed £300 a year to the institution, but that had been withdrawn, and so the society has now to depend on its own resources to carry on the work. This is only one of the many works carried on in Sydney by the St. Vincent de Paul Society. They had received every assistance from the other charitable organisations in Dunedin, and he was only too pleased to return their most sincere thanks to the members of these various organisations for their kind help and assistance. He wished to refer in an especial manner to the assistance rendered by the police, who had always shown their appreciation of the society's work. In conclusion he said that a great deal of charitable work was done in Dunedin in a quiet way about which the public knew but little.

Dr. Hastings, seconding the motion, said that the fact that the work was done quietly and without parade reflected increased credit on the society.

The report and balance sheet were then adopted.

The election of officers for the current year resulted as follows:—President, Mrs. Jackson (re-elected); vice-president, Mrs. Mowat (re-elected); secretary and treasurer, Miss Purton (re-elected); wardrobe keeper, Mrs. Swanson (re-elected).

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