

Federation of Societies

One of the proposals of the recent H.A.C.B.S. conference in Sydney was 'the federation of our various important Catholic societies for purely Catholic and social objects.' Such a union might safely follow on the lines successfully adopted by 'The American Federation of Catholic Societies' at a national convention held in Cincinnati on December 10, 1901. Politics are rigidly excluded from the federated societies in America, but, outside this, the organisation does not interfere with the autonomy or special aims of any of the associations of which it is composed.

The special benefits claimed from the federation of the societies in America are summarily set forth as follows:—

1. The pleasure and profit of knowing, understanding, and sympathising with one another.
2. The facility of meeting in convention, where by friction of brain and interchange of expression, we may improve our plans of organisation and enlarge our power of good.
3. Greater strength and dignity for every individual organisation as a result of its membership in the Federation.
4. Wide advertisement of our various societies and their objects, with the consequent large increase of membership for all of them.
5. Opportunities to discuss those needs of our Catholic people who are not yet joined by associations of piety, charity, or benevolence.
6. Promotion of the growth and spread of Catholic literature.
7. Refutation that will reach the whole body of the people of misunderstandings and calumnies, dogmatic, historical, and inferential, which are so often uttered against the Church.
8. Intensification of the spirit of patriotism in the hearts of all our co-religionists.
9. The social and intellectual improvement of the whole Catholic body through the benefits derived by union among ourselves.
10. The practical demonstration on a large scale to our separated brethren of what, the Catholic Church really is.
11. The gradual eradication of all and old-time unreasonable prejudices against the Church as a body and against Catholics as individuals.

DIocese OF DUNEDIN

We desire to remind our readers of the concert to be given in the Garrison Hall, Dunedin, on the 22nd inst. on behalf of the funds of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. An excellent programme has been prepared, to which the following among others will contribute:—Misses Rose Blaney, Dunsmuir, E. Leonard, Miss Whitman, Messrs. F. Eagar, W. W. Brunson, T. Hussey, A. C. Haulon, and Anthony, pupils of the Christian Brothers and St. Joseph's Choir.

The usual weekly meeting of the St. Joseph's Men's Club was held in St. Joseph's Hall on Friday evening, when there was a good attendance of members. The Rev. Father Murphy, who presided, delivered a very interesting address on 'Literature,' and the Rev. Father Howard impressed on members the importance of taking part in the debates of the club, so that they might learn to express their opinions clearly and to speak with fluency.

On Sunday afternoon in St. Joseph's Cathedral his Lordship Bishop Verdon administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to 141 candidates. Before the administration of the Sacrament his Lordship addressed the children, explaining the nature of Confirmation and the graces which its reception would confer on them. His Lordship was assisted by the Rev. Father Murphy, Adm., St. Joseph's Cathedral, and the Rev. Father Howard. Miss A. Heley acted as sponsor for the girls and Mr. J. Ford for the boys. At the conclusion of the ceremony his Lordship warned the children against the evils of bad company and bad literature, and concluded by giving the pledge of the League of the Cross to all who had been confirmed.

A little wonder is the Broadcast Patent Seed-sower, sold by Morrow, Bassett, and Co. For sowing turnip, rape, grass, and clover seed it has no equal, while for oats, wheat, and barley you have only to see it to know its value. A boy can work it. Sow four acres per hour, and any quantity up to six bushels per acre. Price only 20s.—***

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The Hibernian Society

The second biennial meeting of delegates from the various districts of the H.A.C.B. Society throughout the Commonwealth and New Zealand was opened in St. Benedict's Hall, Sydney, on Monday, April 27. Bro. John Toohy (chief president) was in the chair, and others present were Bros. J. L. Sutton (corresponding secretary), W. M. Fox (chief treasurer), and the following deputies:—Bros. P. O'Loughlin, R. M'Cormack, and E. Moore (New South Wales district), Bro. J. J. Trait (Victoria No. 1), Bro. W. Beehan (New Zealand, No. 3), Bro. J. Casey (Brisbane, Queensland, No. 5), Bro. W. H. Sheehy (Rockhampton, Queensland, No. 6), Bro. J. F. Murphy (Adelaide, No. 7), Bro. T. Earle White (West Australia, No. 8), Bro. J. Whelan (Tasmania, No. 9). An apology for non-attendance was read from the district of North Queensland. Amongst the visitors were Bro. J. W. Howard (Victoria), one of the founders of the society, Rev. Father B. M'Kiernan (Taree), Bro. M. F. Connolly (district vice-president New South Wales district), Bro. W. Hogan (district treasurer), Bro. P. A. Broe (district trustee), Bros. J. M'Elhone and J. B. Molloy (ex-district trustees), Bro. J. Dwyer (ex-district auditor). The opening paragraphs of the report referred to the unanimity of the society throughout Australia, and the success which attended the working of the new Constitution.

Acting on a suggestion contained in the officers' report, it was resolved, on the motion of Bro. Beehan, to cable a message to his Holiness the Pope from that meeting on behalf of the Hibernians of Australasia, congratulating him on having that day reached 'the days of Peter.'

It was decided that the executive directory write to Mr. John Redmond, M.P., assuring him of the support of the society in his efforts to obtain Home Rule for Ireland, and congratulating him on the success which had attended the labors of his party.

It was resolved that the executive be directed to communicate with the various districts of the society asking them to fittingly commemorate, by some special celebration, the centenary of Robert Emmet.

The figures of the society throughout Australasia up to the end of 1902 stand as follow:—Number of new branches opened during the two years, 58 male and 3 female; total membership, 21,185, with accumulated funds of £125,330 18s 10d (returns incomplete), showing an increase since the issue of last E.D. report—a year and a half ago—of 2551 members and £11,100 4s 9d funds. The following is the position of each district:—Members: 1. Victoria, 7888; 3. New Zealand, 1432; 4. New South Wales, 4655; 5. Brisbane, 2047; 6. Rockhampton, 704; 7. Adelaide (returns incomplete), 2365; 8. West Australia, 689; 9. Tasmania, 700; 10. North Queensland, 705 (opened June, 1902, embraces branches formerly included in Brisbane and Rockhampton districts). Total, 21,185. Funds: Victoria, £38,446 11s 11d; 3. New Zealand, £14,801 14s 9d; 4. New South Wales, £20,983 3s 3d; 5. Brisbane, £21,434 16s 11d; 6. Rockhampton, £5607 13s 3d; 7. Adelaide, £13,056 7s 2d; 8. West Australia, £2760 17s 2d; 9. Tasmania, £2678 8s 1d; 10. North Queensland, £5577 18s 5d. Total, £125,347 13s 11d.

On the motion of Bro. Beehan (New Zealand), the following clause of the report was unanimously adopted:—'We might also consider whether we could not do something to banish at least from our Catholic concerts and entertainments that monstrous travesty on our race known as the "Stage Irishman." We are glad that owing to the sturdy action of the American Hibernians such vulgar, insulting caricaturing of our countrymen is no longer tolerated on the American stage; and surely in Australia, where the Irish element of the population is proportionately more numerous, the same result could be accomplished.'

The propriety of inaugurating a Hibernian insurance fund for insuring lives of members and other Catholics in a fixed amount, similar to the A.O.H. of America and other Catholic societies, was also discussed, and it was decided to lay the matter before the various district meetings for an expression of opinion.

The action of the Executive Directory regarding the exchange of clearances with the A.O.H. of America was endorsed.

It was decided to hold the next meeting in Adelaide. The election of officers resulted as follows:—Chief president, Bro. J. Toohy; chief-treasurer, Bro. W. Fox; corresponding secretary, Bro. J. L. Sutton; executive trustees, Bros. J. B. Molloy, J. M'Elhone, and W. Hogan; executive auditors, Bros. J. Dwyer and J. O'Loughlin. The officers of the Executive Directory and the delegates were entertained by the New South Wales district Board on the evening of the opening day at a banquet. Among the guests were Bros. Beehan and Whelan of New Zealand. At the conclusion of the business of the conference the delegates were treated to a harbor excursion, the Government steam launch 'Eva' being kindly lent for the occasion by the Hon. E. W. O'Sullivan.

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