

## ST. MATTHEW'S (LADIES') BRANCH H.A.C.B. SOCIETY

(From our Christchurch correspondent.)

The ordinary business meeting of the above branch of the Hibernian Society was held in the Hibernian Hall on Monday evening, October 29, the president (Sister D. Smyth) presiding. The branch chaplain (Rev. Father T. Hanrahan) was present, and there was a full attendance of officers and members. A number of new members were initiated and others nominated for membership. At the conclusion of the routine business an adjournment was made to the large hall, where the programme of a social evening was most commendably carried out. There was a large gathering of members of the two branches of the Hibernian Society attached to the Cathedral parish, and their friends, invited guests, and representatives of other branches. Miss D. Smyth (president) ably presided over the large gathering, having on her right his Lordship the Bishop, the Rev. Fathers Cooney (Lyttelton) and Murphy, B.A. (Cathedral), and on her left Rev. Father Hanrahan, Rev. Father Long, and Dr. Morkane. The following contributed to the programme:— Brother Fidelis, Mrs. A. Howard, Misses O'Connor (2), E. Rodgers, Messrs. P. J. Smyth, C. Fottrell, and W. Brittenden. Misses K. O'Connor and E. Rogers were the accompanists.

In quite an eloquent presidential address Sister Smyth, after recording an apology for the absence of Sir George and Lady Clifford, thanked the performers for their enjoyable and interesting contributions, also brother-Hibernians of St. Patrick's branch for the use of the hall and for assistance rendered in the formation of the women's branch, and towards the success of the present function. Sister Smyth expressed the gratitude of her branch towards many prominent Catholic citizens for material assistance, and to his Lordship the Bishop, Rev. Fathers Long and Hanrahan for their great encouragement and helpful influence. Appreciation was also expressed of the branch's medical attendant (Dr. Ardagh) for his valued services and deep sympathy. Addressing his Lordship the Bishop, Sister Smyth said it was her most pleasing duty, on behalf of St. Matthew's women's branch, to present and invest the Bishop of Christchurch, as one of the best Hibernians in New Zealand, with a past-president's collar. This was rendered possible by the generosity of a brother, and was their tribute of filial attachment and veneration of the widely honored spiritual head of the diocese, no less than of their love and gratitude. To more closely identify his Lordship with their branch, Sister Smyth said that with the consent of the Bishop's mother, it was with intensified pleasure she was able to announce that Mrs. Brodie had been elected the first life member of St. Matthew's branch, and whom, she sincerely trusted, would be spared for many years as a member of what it was confidently anticipated would become the leading women's branch of the Hibernian Society in this Dominion. (The collar is a particularly handsome and artistic example of needlework and design, and reflects great credit on the Good Shepherd Nuns of Mount Magdala, by whom it was made.)

In acknowledging the gift, his Lordship said their choice was most pleasing to him, and it seemed very strange that they had decided upon such an appropriate one, as although he had previously been the founder of a branch of the society and its presiding officer, he did not receive a P.P. collar. It was from the youngest branch in the Dominion, and that a ladies' branch, that such a presentation had come, and he appreciated the compliment accordingly. He wished the association every blessing. Nothing, he said, was more gratifying to him when he came to the diocese as its Bishop than to find it possessed of grand branches of the Hibernian Society. Hibernian branches of women would supply a great want in New Zealand and enable our young girls and women to emulate the saintly maidens of holy Ireland, by that nobility of character and example which the rules and constitution of the society engendered. St. Matthew's branch (continued his Lordship) would be his pet branch, and he intended to take a special interest in it. In naming it, they paid him personally the highest compliment in selecting that of his

patron saint. He cordially joined with them in the fervent hope that St. Matthew's would be the strongest women's branch in New Zealand. He feelingly referred to the compliment paid to his mother, and, expressing admiration of the beautiful collar, said he was delighted to be present that evening, and deeply appreciated being so honored by the branch. Advocating its interest and advancement would be to him not alone a duty, but a privilege and a pleasure, and he wished it the choicest blessings.

Rev. Father Cooney, in a few brief but particularly apt remarks, said it was not unusual in some circumstances to get the ear of a bishop, but the unique experience of 'collaring' one had fallen to the good fortune of the lady Hibernians of Christchurch. He complimented them on their achievement, congratulated his Lordship on receiving such a beautiful gift accompanied by the sincere sentiments expressed by the president, and whilst expressing his own pleasure at being present at their first important gathering, wished the branch every possible success.

Rev. Father Hanrahan said as chaplain it gave the members of St. Matthew's branch great delight to welcome his Lordship the Bishop to the present gathering. They were very grateful for the deep and kindly interest manifested by his Lordship in their young branch. From eight members which formed the branch but six weeks ago the number that evening had increased to thirty, with a large total of new nominations. The success attained was mainly due to the excellent officers, as the eloquent address of the president that evening plainly indicated. He (the speaker) could assure his Lordship that in common with Hibernians generally he would have the whole-hearted support of the lady members of St. Matthew's branch in all his undertakings.

A bountiful supply of refreshments was handed round, and the evening, with its attendant functions, was thoroughly enjoyed.

## DIocese OF CHRISTCHURCH

(From our own correspondent.)

November 13.

Accepting a challenge from the girl inmates of the Institute for the Deaf, Sumner, a team of basket-ball players, composed of senior pupils of the Sacred Heart Girls' College, played a match on the grounds of the former on Saturday afternoon, November 4. The game was fast and even, and resulted in a win for the Institute by seven goals to six. The visitors were entertained to afternoon tea and were kindly shown over the Institute by the staff, spending an exceedingly pleasant and enjoyable time.

As briefly mentioned in last week's issue of the *Tablet*, a very pleasant evening was spent in the Hibernian Hall on Wednesday, November 1, when a lecture on Irish Music was given by a member of the Celtic Club to a highly appreciative audience comprising the members of the club and their numerous friends. Rev. Father Long presided. During the course of the lecture, musical and poetical illustrations of the different points touched upon by the lecturer were made by the following ladies and gentlemen:— Rev. Father Murphy, B.A., Mr. W. Brittenden, and Misses M. and K. O'Connor. One item of great interest was the playing by Miss K. O'Connor as a piano solo of the favorite Irish air, 'The Coulin.' This proved to be quite a new departure in the rendering of old Irish airs. At the conclusion of the lecture, Rev. Father Long, on behalf of the Celtic Club, thanked the lecturer for his instructive discourse. The lecturer suitably responded and thanked the club for giving him an opportunity to speak on such an interesting and pleasing subject.

The following pupils of Miss Mary G. O'Connor, A.T.C.L., one of our best-known teachers and vocalists, were successful at the recent practical examinations, also theoretical, held in June:—Practical.—Intermediate Division (honors)—M. L. Davies, 80; H. O. Purdie, 77 (pass). Junior Division (honors)—Gracie James, 88; Gladys Tabley, 83; Amy Campbell, 81. Theoretical.—Junior Division (honors)—M. L. Davies, 99; H. O. Purdie, 91. Preparatory—F. Meadowcroft, 94; Molly Bradley, 76.