

FEDERATED CATHOLIC CLUBS OF NEW ZEALAND

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

(From our Christchurch correspondent.)

The tenth annual conference of the Federated Catholic Clubs of New Zealand opened on Saturday evening at the rooms of the Christchurch Catholic Club.

The president, Mr. A. H. Casey, presided. The following is a list of delegates present:—Auckland, Mr. G. Dee; Wellington, Messrs. B. T. Leydon and William Tiller; Wellington South, Messrs. T. Pender and J. J. Fitzgibbon; Christchurch, Messrs. J. R. Hayward and P. McNamara; Greymouth, Messrs. M. Moriarty and M. Keating; Hokitika, Mr. J. Hanrahan; Westport, Mr. E. A. Anderson; Blenheim, Mr. P. O'Dwyer; Ashburton, Messrs. D. McDonnell and J. Sims; Temuka, Mr. T. Horgan; Waimate, Mr. J. Hickey; Queenstown, Mr. T. O'Connell; Manaia, Messrs. J. Burke and D. Bourke; Thames, Mr. R. Ewing; Otahuhu, Mr. F. O'Connell; Onehunga, Mr. J. S. Tullock. The federation executive was represented by Messrs. A. H. Casey (president), and J. L. Leydon (hon. secretary).

The Rev. Dr. Kennedy, S.M., attended, and on behalf of Bishop Grimes and the clergy extended a hearty welcome to the visiting delegates. He urged them to remain loyal to the cause of Catholic clubs and the federation, and spoke in appreciative terms of the good work done by the federation.

Mr. J. R. Hayward, president of the Christchurch Club, also welcomed the delegates on behalf of the local club members.

The president delivered a short address, in which he urged the delegates to enter into the true spirit of the conference, and to be earnest, zealous, and thorough in their deliberations.

A letter was received from Archbishop Redwood, wishing the conference every success.

The recently-formed Manaia Catholic Club was admitted to the federation.

The annual report and balance sheet were unanimously adopted.

His Grace Archbishop Redwood, S.M., is President-General, and the election of officers resulted as follows:—President, Mr. A. H. Casey; vice-president, Mr. J. McGowan; hon. secretary, Mr. J. L. Leydon; hon. treasurer, Mr. H. McKeown; executive committee—Messrs. B. A. Guise, J. W. Callaghan, and T. Pender.

It was decided to hold the next conference at Wellington.

Reports on the past year's work were received from the affiliated clubs showing that most of the branches were in a flourishing condition.

A report was brought up on the finances of the *Catholic Magazine*, and it was urged on subscribers the necessity of at once discharging their obligations, to enable accounts to be finally adjusted. Fraternal greetings were extended to the Newman Society in conference at Auckland.

The desirability of appointing a Catholic organiser to consolidate all Catholic clubs and societies in each parish with a view to the formation of a Catholic League for New Zealand was unanimously approved. The executive was instructed to bring the matter before the coming conference of Catholic Bishops.

Three entries were received for the essay competition promoted by the executive on the subject, 'The Best Means of Promoting and Ensuring the Continuance of the Welfare of Catholic Clubs in New Zealand.' The papers, written respectively by Messrs. G. Hanson (Thames), C. Mahon (Auckland), and J. R. Tryon (Greymouth), were read at the conference, and it was decided to award a diploma to the best paper.

Many suggestions for the improvement of the Federation and of its constituent clubs were made and noted by the delegates.

The conference unanimously affirmed the desirability of mutual co-operation in extending the membership and participating in the work of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, the Catholic Seamen's Conference, the Hibernian Society and Boys' Clubs. Cordial appreciation was expressed regarding the good work of the *New Zealand Tablet* in upholding the Catholic interests and in offering special facilities for the publication of Catholic club notes.

After several minor matters had been dealt with, the conference was brought to a conclusion with a hearty vote of thanks to the Christchurch Club for its hospitality to the visiting delegates.

The delegates were taken for a drive on Sunday afternoon through the suburbs of the city, and entertained to afternoon tea at the residence of Mr. W. Hayward, Sen., Cashmere Hills. On Monday evening they were entertained at a social reunion at the Catholic Clubrooms, Sir George Clifford, Bart., president of honor of the local Catholic Club, presiding. On the platform were his Lordship Bishop Grimes, Very Rev. Father Price, Mr. A. H.

Casey, and Mr. J. R. Hayward. A large gathering of club members and lady friends and a number of clergy were present.

Sir Geo. Clifford in the course of a brief address, said it was his pleasant duty to tender a hearty welcome to his Lordship Bishop Grimes. They were all proud of his Lordship's work in the diocese and of the recognition that was given to it, not only by themselves but by the whole of the community. The week had been a very arduous one for his Lordship, and he thought he might congratulate him on coming through such a week showing so little wear and tear. The chairman, continuing, said he also wished to tender a hearty welcome to the delegates whom they had met to honor that evening. He could imagine nothing more beneficial than the interchange of thought and opinions at a conference such as the one just closed. They did not recognise the difference in the position of Catholics now and the Catholics of a generation or two ago—how their grandfathers and fathers had to attend Mass surreptitiously and how the offices of the Church were attended with some peril by those who carried them out. He knew where there was an altar-stone such as had been carried not a great many years ago by priests in disguise so that they might administer to the faithful. In the hall of one of his friends there was a framed 'permit'—Catholics in those days were not allowed to go outside their country unless they had a permit—which was worded something as follows: 'This permit is to admit—from Lancashire into Gloucestershire to court a young lady.' Then again, no Catholic could ride a horse worth more than £5 because at any time any person might claim his horse—no matter how good the animal was—by simply saying 'that's my horse,' and paying £5. If he (the speaker) were living in those days they would see how awkward would be his position. These laws, continued Sir George, entailed certain prejudices and these prejudices were only gradually being dissipated. He remembered even in his own time how much prejudice there was, after Catholic Emancipation, against a Catholic sitting in the House of Commons. He believed that associations such as those to which the delegates they had met to do honor that evening belonged were important in maintaining the true Catholic spirit such as they desired to exist, and which had a great leavening influence on the community. It was the clubs that fostered this spirit that they should do their utmost to encourage. They were exceedingly glad to welcome the delegates and they hoped their deliberations might tend to the prosperity of the associations to which they belonged.

Bishop Grimes, after thanking Sir Geo. Clifford for his remarks, said that they owed a great deal of their present-day liberty to the great O'Connell, 'the uncrowned king of Ireland,' who, although his views and opinions were not always in accord with those of many people with whom he came into contact, was esteemed by all for his manliness and his staunch loyalty to the Church. It was very cheering to find men in eminent positions, like Sir George Clifford—who without any touch of dogma—also fearlessly showed their loyalty to the Church. Continuing, the Bishop said it was also most cheering to find a number of young men banded together for mutual improvement. He felt that in their club they had a number of young men who were thoroughly united, and they were exceedingly fortunate in having at their head Mr. Hayward, jun., the president, and their chaplain, Dr. Kennedy. He heartily welcomed the visiting delegates and hoped the club would flourish.

Mr. A. H. Casey, president of Federated Catholic Clubs, also addressed the gathering. He warmly thanked the previous speakers for their words of welcome and encouragement, likewise the officers and members of the Christchurch Catholic Club, who had done so much to make the visitors' stay enjoyable. Mr. Casey went on to urge the co-operation of all Catholic bodies in a Catholic League which would be able to make an aggressive campaign against the tendency of the present time to distort Catholic views and doctrines. In conclusion he thanked all concerned for the hospitality extended to the visiting delegates.

On the invitation of Mr. Hayward, jun., (president of the club) hearty cheers were given for Sir George and Lady Clifford.

During the evening an entertaining programme was provided, comprising pianoforte soli by Mr. A. J. Bunz, songs by Messrs. R. Beveridge, G. Hayward, F. Evans, J. Maloney, Burton, F. Healey, and F. O'Connell, and recitations by Messrs. Fotherill, F. W. Rowe, E. O. Anderson, and Laurensen. Refreshments were handed round, and the evening generally proved most enjoyable.

An international congress of representatives of institutions for the care of the blind has just been held at Cairo. Representatives of the various institutions of the kind in different parts of the world were present. The chair was occupied by the president, Brother Amadeus, Superior-General of the Brothers of Charity. On his way to the congress Brother Amadeus, with companions, had an audience of the Holy Father. His Holiness gave his blessing to the congress, and also in a special manner blessed the Superior-General and the works of the Brothers of Charity, notably the new mission in the Congo.