

## CORRESPONDENCE

[We do not hold ourselves responsible for opinions expressed by our correspondents.]

THE CATHOLIC FEDERATION AND THE TABLET  
TO THE EDITOR.

Sir,—At the meeting of the Wellington Diocesan Council held at Hastings on the 14th inst., a resolution was passed expressing the wish of the council that the "Tablet" be placed upon the tables of every public library in the Dominion. This resolution is to be sent to the Dominion Council for its endorsement, and for any action deemed necessary to carry the intention of this council into effect. It will no doubt be pleasing to you to know that the journal which you so ably control is so highly appreciated, and the council trusts that it will not only be found in every library in the Dominion but in every Catholic home worthy of the name.

With every good wish for the success of the *Tablet*.—I am, etc.,

W. F. JOHNSON,

Hon. Sec. Wellington Diocesan Council.  
Wellington, January 29, 1920.

## H.A.C.B. SOCIETY.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir,—In glancing through the half-yearly report for August, 1919, meeting of the above society, I see that the executive is appealing to all branches to set to work earnestly and go in for a systematic and thorough canvass for new members. In this respect the executive is to be congratulated, and should secure the cheerful assistance of every Hibernian. There is no reason why our society should not be the premier society in the Dominion, and attract to its fold every Catholic young man who is of an age to join a friendly society. We can claim that our benefits are as liberal as any other society's, while our contributions compare favorably with all others, whilst in addition, and above all, we have the true Catholic spirit so essential to our future welfare, and yet in spite of this our numbers are disgracefully small; and one may well ask himself—"Why is this so, Whose is the fault, and Where is the remedy?" To me the whole fault seems to lie in the fact that the representatives of the branches are so seldom brought together in conference with the grand officers of the society that the private members have nothing but occasional letters (few and far between) to remind them that there is supposed to be a live body other than their own particular branch which is controlling the destinies of this fine society.

True there is a district meeting held half-yearly, but what do these amount to? To me they resemble nothing so much as the "packed juries" which so often in the past have worked such ruin and destruction amongst our kith and kin in years which are still within the memory of living men. I say they resemble packed juries because it is the experience of all branches that have attempted to bring forward any legislation that would work to the betterment of the society, to find that owing to the impossibility of sending direct representatives to these meetings at Auckland, many of the branches delegate their powers to "proxies," who are as a rule selected by the executive or district secretary, and are never advised as to the wish of the branch on the matters on which they are to represent them, with the result that they invariably vote with the executive.

In order to remedy such a vicious system attempts have been made in the past to amend the constitution by providing for annual direct representative meetings—fewer in number but each member being the selected representative of the sub-district he represents. Another effort is being made at the next annual meeting in February to bring these sub-districts into existence and give the society a new lease of life, and encourage the members to stick together for their own interests and for the welfare of the society at a time when unity is so essential.

In addition to this sub-district scheme, which was turned down in 1916 owing to the scarcity of direct representatives at the meeting, and which has since been taken up in toto and spoken of most highly by the Druids, there are two other very important remits on the order paper which should not be allowed to go to a proxy meeting for decision. They are—(a) The consolidation of the sick fund; (b) the increase of the death benefit insurance scheme from £50 to £100. So important are these three items that it behoves the executive to bestir itself and arrange for a direct representative meeting at some centre where there will be a reasonable possibility of branch representatives being present to express the views of their members instead of being represented by proxies who simply vote, and then always vote "right."

At the last triennial meeting in 1913, since when the war has been the excuse for holding no other, Westport

was the chosen ground for the next meeting, but it is rumored that the executive, whilst willing to have a representative meeting in February, claim that they have no funds to carry out the meeting at Westport. If that is so and the matter were put to St. Canice's branch at Westport I feel sure that under the circumstances they would forego their claim for a centre like Christchurch, or any other more central than Auckland.

I trust the executive will realise the great importance of the forthcoming meeting and use every endeavor to hold a direct representative meeting in lieu of the two which in the ordinary course of things should have taken place in 1916 and 1919.—I am, etc.,

J. J. L. BURKE.

Wellington, January 16, 1920.

## CARDINAL WISEMAN AN IRISHMAN.

A Catholic lecturer recently seemed to surprise as much as delight his audience in a Middle West town with a reference to Cardinal Wiseman as an Irishman (said Abbe Ernest Dimnet, who was recently in America obtaining aid for the reconstruction and refitting of the University of Lille).

Probably the name of Cardinal Wiseman is responsible for the mistaken idea that he was English, but if we were to deny Irish nationality to whomever was not called Patrick Murphy or McMahon or O'Connell, things would go hard indeed with many Irishmen whose features, as much as their feelings, show an unadulterated origin.

Nicholas Wiseman was born not in England, but in Spain, at Cadiz, of Irish parents, engaged like so many of their countrymen in the wine business. His mother came from Watertown, Co. Cork, whither she retired when her husband died. Young Nicholas was at that time only three, and although he seemed almost preternaturally to remember whatever of Spanish he had mastered at that age, it must be admitted that all his early associations were Irish.

This ought not to be overlooked at a time when Ireland takes stock of all her great men as well as at a time when an almost yearly crop of books on the early Christian times has brought attention back to the unique masterpiece called *Fabiola*.

It should be remembered that *Fabiola* came before all the fiction of the same kind, even *Callista* or *Hypatia*. It was written in pure joy at inns or rectories, in the train or in the sacristy waiting for confirmation children to arrive, by a man who had never attempted fiction but who knew antiquity better than most scholars, and lived in such continuous and happy commune with his characters that in little over six months the book was completed. The manuscript was perfect with hardly an erasure, in the graceful script remarkable on the all too rare autographs of Wiseman.

It is this wealth of pure and happy feeling that insures to *Fabiola* its everlasting freshness and keeps it green while so many imitations by writers of all creeds have long been faded.

Let Irishmen be proud of the greatest Catholic churchman and writer that wielded the English pen in the nineteenth century.

## IRISH HISTORY AND LANGUAGE.

In connection with the Irish literary and national renaissance at home and abroad, Queensland Gaels are about to get the opportunity of participating in a very practical and well-organised way. First of all, a large prize fund is being established for the carrying out of an annual examination in Irish language, history, and literature. Particulars have been sent to all the schools, with the view of their commencing studies immediately after the Christmas holidays, and we are pleased to be in a position now to announce that His Grace the Archbishop of Brisbane has given his approval, and the Hibernians have given their consent to the use of St. Stephen's old school for a special class conducted free by Mr. M. C. O'Halloran, on Sunday afternoons, at which young and old are invited to attend. The introductory address and first lesson was to be given on Sunday afternoon, January 4.

His Grace has also announced that he will donate a valuable prize in connection with the examinations, on conditions which will be announced later. The special class referred to will enable teachers who may so desire to observe the methods adopted, and it will not only give an insight to children returning to school, in preparation for their future studies, but will give adults an opportunity to learn something of their glorious past, and, by their example, of performing a very urgent and very important duty. We would urge young and old—the clergy, teachers, parents, children, and all who have a love for Ireland, to continue steadfast in the good work.—*Catholic Advocate*.

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