

N.Z. CATHOLIC FEDERATION

WELLINGTON DIOCESAN COUNCIL: HALF-YEARLY MEETING.

The fourteenth half-yearly meeting of the Wellington Diocesan Council was held at St. Patrick's Hall, Hastings, on Wednesday, January 14. The proceedings commenced with Mass at the Church of the Sacred Heart, celebrated by the Rev. Father Barra, S.M., after which the Very Rev. Father O'Connell, S.M., of Wanganui, president of the New Zealand Catholic Federation, delivered an eloquent and impressive discourse, the summary of which is as follows:—

"We are here this morning to invoke the blessing of Almighty God upon the deliberations of the Diocesan Council of the Catholic Federation. The Federation stands for all that is good in the national and civic life of the people of New Zealand, and it especially appeals to us on account of its efforts in promoting the cause of Christian education. The Federation has made a forward step by instituting a number of scholarships throughout New Zealand, to be known as the Federation Scholarships; by means of which it is sincerely hoped that there will eventually be a number of educated Catholic laymen and women who will take their place in the public life of the Dominion and prove themselves worthy leaders of the people. Established, as the Federation was, with the approval and blessing of the Sovereign Pontiff and of the Archbishops and Bishops of the Dominion, it should appeal to every conscientious Catholic as a duty to support it, and to do everything possible to bind the Catholic people of the Dominion together. Christian education was at the root of a sound social system, and no sacrifice was too great to make so that the children might have the inestimable advantage of a sound training in Catholic principles. Parents had rights that no one could abrogate or usurp, and it was gratifying indeed to see the spirit of sacrifice exemplified in the number of Catholic educational establishments throughout the Dominion. The Federation had accomplished much during the brief period of its existence, but much remained to be done, and it was the duty of everyone to give it the fullest possible support.

The council assembled at 10 a.m. Mr. W. M. Luxford (Wanganui), vice-president, being elected to the chair in the unavoidable absence of the president of the council, the Rev. Father Hurley, S.M. The following representatives were in attendance: Blenheim, Mr. Charles Hughes; Dannevirke, Mr. P. J. Horlby; Mr. Hedderman; Hastings, Rev. Father G. Mahony, S.M.; Mr. T. T. Dennott; Mr. F. Pinley; Masterton, Mr. S. O'Regan; Napier, Mr. J. Callaghan, Mr. C. C. Willis; Pahiataua, Mr. A. E. Hayden; Waipawa, Mr. S. McGroovy; Mr. A. Choate; Wanganui, Very Rev. Father O'Connell, S.M.; Mr. W. M. Luxford, Mrs. Luxford; Woodville, Mr. L. Dobbyn; Wellington—St. Ann's, Mr. W. F. Johnson; St. Joseph's, Rev. Father Barra, S.M.; Mr. D. Donovan; Mr. J. J. O'Gorman; St. Mary's, Rev. Father S. Mahony; Miss Burke, Mrs. Scott; Thorndon, Mr. G. Girling-Butcher, Mr. E. D. Dunne.

In his opening address, the chairman said that he had first of all to express the regret of the Council that the president, the Rev. Father Hurley, S.M., was unavoidably absent. Father Hurley had always taken the deepest interest in the work of the Federation, and for the past five years had held the office of president. His experience had been of the utmost value to the Federation, and everyone present would miss his genial personality at the meeting.

Mr. Luxford thanked the Rev. Father Mahony for the invitation to hold the council meeting at Hastings, and felt sure that the representatives present would carry away with them pleasant memories of Hastings and its surroundings. With regard to Federation matters, the membership shown by the returns for the past six months in this diocese constituted a record, which was extremely gratifying in these times of opposition and persecution. A great field of usefulness lay before the Federation in educating the people in Catholic principles, and to this end Mr. Luxford looked forward to the time when there would be a Catholic daily newspaper in each of the four centres. In the meantime, much good could be done by the dissemination of Catholic literature such as the Catholic Truth Society's publications, and he was pleased to understand that the monthly Bulletin from the head office would be issued very shortly. Referring to educational matters, Mr. Luxford suggested that a round-table conference might be held, at which all who believed in religion in education might be represented, and felt that such a conference could only result in good. He referred feelingly to the death of Mr. P. E. Dromgool, a member

of the Dominion Executive, a gentleman of brilliant ability and a sterling member of the Catholic community, whose services were always at the disposal of the Church; to the recent death of Mr. J. A. McEwan, a former member of the committee at Pahiataua; to Mr. M. Walsh, a former member of the executive, who mourned the recent loss of his mother; and to the severe accident recently sustained by Mr. T. J. McCosker, a former member of the diocesan and Dominion Executives, to whom the Federation was much indebted for professional assistance in the erection of the camp halls, etc., and concluded by moving—"That a letter of sympathy be sent to the representatives of each of the gentlemen mentioned."—The resolution was carried in silence, the members standing.

The Executive Committee's report (which appeared in the February 5 issue of the *Tablet*) was read and adopted.

FEDERATION SCHOLARSHIPS.

On behalf of the Napier Committee, Mr. Callaghan moved the following remit: "That the regulation by which two scholarships are to be awarded triennially be altered to allow of one scholarship being awarded annually."

Mr. Callaghan, in moving the motion, said that the proposal submitted by the Napier Committee would, if carried, result in a sustained interest in the scholarships. Under the regulation carried at the last meeting of the council, by which the scholarships were awarded every three years, it might be found that interest in the matter would undoubtedly slacken during the intervening years, and it would require considerable effort to revive it when the scholarships became due. Under the proposal submitted by Napier, the scholarships would be before the people every year, and this would naturally result in a wider interest than could be maintained under the present conditions. He admitted that the amendment now submitted would result in one more scholarship being granted than originally intended, but felt sure that the wider publication given to the Federation scholarships would result in a largely increased membership of the Federation, and consequently a larger revenue to the Scholarships Fund.

The Very Rev. Father O'Connell, S.M., in seconding the motion, agreed entirely with the arguments submitted by Mr. Callaghan, and said that the merit of the remit lay in the fact that the scholarships would be before the people every year.

Several members spoke in favor of the remit, and on being put to the vote it was declared carried unanimously.

GENERAL BUSINESS.

Mr. Dobbyn moved—"That the *Tablet* be placed in every public library in the Dominion, and that this resolution be sent on as a recommendation to the Dominion Council." Mr. Dobbyn referred in eulogistic terms to the manner in which the *Tablet* had always defended Catholic interests, and said that if the Catholic position was better understood there would be far less opposition than at present. The motion was agreed to unanimously.

Mr. Dobbyn further moved—"That the secretary convey to the Rev. Dr. Kelly the high appreciation of the council of the able manner in which he has defended the Catholic cause in the columns of the *Tablet*."—This motion was carried with acclamation.

Mr. Girling-Butcher spoke of the necessity for educating public speakers. The young men were not taking their part in public life, and the parish committees should take this matter up, and do something to encourage and develop the latent talent in their midst. The committee he represented had passed a remit concerning this matter, but evidently it had not arrived in time.

The Very Rev. Father O'Connell supported the remarks of Mr. Butcher, and said that the younger men should receive every encouragement to enter public and civic life in the Dominion.

Mr. Callaghan understood that circumstances had arisen which would prevent the Rev. Father Hurley from continuing in office as president of the Diocesan Council. He moved—"That this council place on record its high appreciation of the services of the Rev. Father Hurley, S.M., as its president for the past five years, and sincerely regrets that it will—for a time at least—be deprived of the benefit of his counsel and advice. Several members spoke to the motion, referring especially to the able and tactful manner in which the Rev. Father Hurley had conducted the business at the council meetings.—The motion was carried unanimously.

Mr. O'Regan moved a sincere vote of thanks to the Hastings Committee for its hospitality. The visit to Hastings had been indeed one of pleasure, and he felt sure he expressed the sentiments of every member of the council.—Carried unanimously.

Mr. O'Gorman moved—"That a hearty vote of thanks be accorded Mr. Luxford for his services in the chair." Mr. Luxford had taken the position at a moment's notice,