

Poverty Bay Clerical Association.

At a meeting of the Poverty Bay Clerical Association on April 9th, the following resolution was passed with instructions to forward a copy to the Bishops of the province, and to the Clerical Societies in the different Dioceses:—

“That this meeting affirms the opinion that adequate religious instruction must form the basis of the curriculum in all Schools and Training Colleges; and realising with thankfulness that there is a growing desire for agreement among all denominations on the subject, it believes that the time is opportune for steps to be taken to find a basis for agreement and to formulate a general scheme involving no sacrifice of principle on the part of any denomination. With this end in view the Bishops of the Province are earnestly and respectfully asked to confer with the heads of other denominations so that no time may be lost in deciding upon some suitable course of action.”

It was felt that while we must press on with our Church Schools, they could never meet the need alone and that the matter of religious instruction in State Schools must not be allowed to drop.

Correspondence.

(To the Editor).

Sir,—In the May issue of the “Gazette” you draw attention to the Bishop’s appeal on behalf of the Jerusalem and the East Mission and you conclude by saying, “Will all who are willing to give or who have funds in hand kindly send them at once to the Diocesan Secretary, Napier?” By the same mail arrives a circular letter from the Bishop in which he says: “With regard to moneys subscribed. We are most anxious to ascertain what is being contributed by the Church of this Province for Foreign Missions. I would urge therefore that as far as possible all moneys collected or subscribed for Foreign Missions be passed through the Parish books. . . .” It is quite obvious that this was written after your note had gone to press, but if you would be kind enough to draw attention to it, it would probably save a good deal of muddling. I have been endeavoring for some time to get people to send their subscriptions and donations through the Parish books.—I am, etc.,

J. PIGOTT.

The Vicarage,
Waipiro Bay, May 7th, 1918.

United Ministers’ Conference.

For the last ten years it has been the custom in Gisborne on Whit Monday for the clergy of the district to meet the ministers of other denominations in conference to discuss controversial questions in a perfectly frank manner in order to get a knowledge of one another’s position as a first requisite for any removal of obstacles to union. This is in accordance with the recommendation of the last Lambeth Conference, and ten years’ experience has proved that it can be done with advantage and without any sacrifice of principle, or bitterness of feeling. The meetings have taken place at Te Rau College. At the last meeting held on Whit Monday, May 20th, there were present:—Anglicans: Ven. Archdeacon Williams, Revs. Packe, Rawnsley, Ward, Wilson, Chatterton, Malcolm, Drake, Te Kanapa, Puha, Wharehina and Tokoroa. Non-Anglicans: Revs. Aitken and Wheeldon (Presbyterian), Abbey (Wesleyan), Carlisle (Baptist), and Messrs Parlane and Jones (Presbyterian Home Missionaries).

The Ven. Archdeacon Williams was voted to the chair.

The meeting began at 10.30 a.m. with a short but very helpful devotional paper on “Prayer” by Rev. Abbey. He dwelt very strongly on the necessity of undisturbed private prayer if the life and work of the minister was to be effectual. After this the Ven. Archdeacon Williams opened the subject for discussion, which was, “Are the present divisions of the Church justifiable.” He drew a sketch of the early history of the Church in its undivided state, and then gave an outline of the various divisions from the schism between the East and West in the 11th Century, and the rise of the various bodies which separated at the time of the Reformation, and afterwards down to our own day. The evil results of these divisions were then pointed out, and the question asked whether it was necessary that they should continue, and if not, what steps should be taken to improve the present condition of things. Rev. J. Carlisle (Baptist) followed, and stated that in his opinion so long as the Anglican Church did not recognise the other religious bodies as branches of the Church, the present divisions are justifiable and will continue. He considered that the Baptist Church was as real a part of Christ’s Church as any other communion, and had the seal of God’s approval in its spiritual results. After the two opening addresses the discussion was continued by Revs. Ramsay, Chatterton, Aitken, Wilson and Packe and Messrs Parlane and Jones until 1 o’clock. Quite a

number of important points were brought out. The Conference proved most interesting and the time was, all too short. The members lunched together afterwards at the Alexandra Tea-rooms.

Girls’ Friendly Society.

A meeting of the Diocesan Council was held at the Lodge, Napier, on Wednesday, May 8th. It was decided to hold a conference of G.F.S. Associates in September or October, the date and speakers to be settled later.

It was agreed that Bible Searching Papers for members should again be set, and Deaconess Esther Brand undertook to prepare a paper on “The Scripture Rules and Counsels in the Guide Book.” It was agreed to ask that the offertories in the parishes on the Annual Day of Intercession and Thanksgiving (Thursday, June 20th) should be given to the G.F.S. War Work Fund (England). Miss Holmes was appointed assistant secretary to Mrs Stopford.

Mrs Anderson gave an interesting account of the G.F.S. room, recently bought and furnished by the Hastings branch, and used by members as a rest and lunch room, as well as for meetings.

A letter was then read from Lady Vincent, President of G.F.S. work in Northern and Central Europe, in which she expressed her thanks and that of her Council for the sum of £25 sent from Waiapu Diocese to the Foreign Lodges’ Fund. She said: “It gives us a special sense of the warmth and comfort of G.F.S. friendship when it reaches us at a time like this.” She also added: “Please give my hearty greetings to your Council and beg that if any of them should visit England while I am still President they will surely let me know, that I may arrange a meeting between us.”

A Generous Gift.

The Rev. F. W. Whibley reports that a generous Churchman (or Churchwoman?) has given £1000 to provide a soup, coffee, etc. stall among the New Zealand troops under the management of the Church Army. We mentioned in the “Gazette” some time ago that a chaplain at the front was appealing for such a stall and expressing the appreciation of the boys for Mr McHardy’s van, which is a similar stall run by the Y.M.C.A., and we understand that the present generous offer is the result of that appeal. The donor wishes to remain anonymous.