



The Waiapu Church Gazette.

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Diocese of Waiapu.

Private letters intended for the Bishop should be directed to him personally, Napier Terrace, Napier. Official letters for the Bishop should be directed to him care of the Diocesan Secretary.

All Parochial Business Communications should be sent to the Diocesan Secretary. Such letters should not be addressed to him, or to anyone by name, but as follows:—The Diocesan Secretary, Diocesan Office, P.O. Box 227, Napier.

Cheques should be crossed, marked "not negotiable," and made payable to the order of the Diocesan Secretary, and not to anyone by name. The Diocesan Secretary is the Archdeacon of Hawke's Bay, the Ven. Archdeacon Simkin.

Phones: Office, 877; House, 798.

The Bishop's Engagements.

September—

11th, Meeting of Chapter.

12th, Synod.

14th,

21st, Wairoa and Country Districts.

28th, Wairoa and Country Dis-

October—

5th, Porangahau.

12th, Havelock and Hastings.

19th, Maori.

Clive.

26th, Waipawa.

Maori (3 p.m.).

Confirmation.

The Bishop of Newcastle, in a letter to the "Diocesan Churchman," says:—As I go through the Diocese two facts are persistently impressed upon me. The first is the discrepancy between the numbers of the baptised and of the confirmed. The second is the still greater difference between the numbers of the confirmed and of the regular communicants. And both

these facts are largely due to the same cause. The majority of our people think mainly of the human side of Confirmation. To them it is an occasion for young people to confirm the vows made for them by their god-parents, and the essence of the rite is the publicly expressed resolution to live a Christian life. And this idea is fostered by the language of our Prayer Book. But the idea is mistaken and the results disastrous. As a matter of fact the confirmation of our vows is merely a late addition to our service and forms no part of its substance. It may be a valuable addition, but it should not be allowed to overshadow the real meaning of the service. The essential part of Confirmation is not what the candidates do, but what God does. It is the Sacrament through which God confirms or strengthens them by the gift of the Holy Spirit. And yet in the minds of many parents, this action of God is less important than the promises of the candidates.

The result is a dangerous delay of Confirmation till the age of sixteen or even later. The first consequence of this delay is that we lose many candidates. At the age of fourteen a large proportion of our young people go out into the world, to breathe its atmosphere and face its temptations. They are too weak to resist evil influences without the help of Confirmation and Holy Communion, and they gradually drift away from religion. And as they have been led to believe that Confirmation is mainly a profession of religious earnestness, the refusal to make such a profession is both inevitable and honest. If it had been realised that God's help was the essential element in the sacrament, they might have been confirmed at an earlier age and have had a fair chance in life. Instead of pleading that their children were too young to be confirmed, the parents should have asked themselves—Are they too young to receive God's grace, and are they too young to fall into habitual sin without that grace?

The second consequence of delay is the frequent failure to remain communicants. Probably the idea of

communion is presented to the candidates for the first time when they are being prepared. It is unfamiliar, and they cannot in a few weeks learn its value or its necessity. And the idea comes to them at a time when other novel ideas are presenting themselves, when they are tasting the sweets of liberty, when they are entering a new and attractive world and exposed to new and dangerous temptations. They make their communions two or three times, after much persuasion; but when the pressure relaxes and life becomes normal, they drop off. There has not been time to establish a habit or to profit by experience. But it would make all the difference if for a year or two before the plunge into the world, the habit of regular communion had been fixed and the soul strengthened by sacramental grace. I may add that an examination of parochial records supports the belief that persons confirmed at an early age are more likely to remain regular communicants than those whose Confirmation has been postponed.

Medical Missions.

The "Church Times" says that, at the Medical Mission meeting in connection with the S.P.G. annual meeting, Miss Crosby gave a speech of exceptional interest, not only for its intrinsic value, but also as extending our knowledge (which is all too small) of the missionary work that is being done on the Catholic side by our great sister-Church of the United States. As Miss Tickell had spoken of the vital importance of the Society's work in regard to the training of native nurses and women medical students for the evangelisation of India, so Miss Crosby pleaded a like need among the Chinese. The great burden of her speech was the "unnecessary heroism" of medical missionaries.

"Of heroism," she said, "there is much that is inevitably necessary, and we thank God that there is. We don't want the missionary cause to be an easy one, and we feel that the ap-