

Fray, Cathedral organist. After a hymn had been sung, the Rev. Canon Mayne offered prayer specially suited to the occasion.

The chairman said the meeting had been called to commemorate the signing of the Church's constitution on June 13th, 1857. He read the preamble of the constitution, and said it would be seen from its terms that their Church claimed to be a very ancient one, having descended from the Apostolic Church right down to the present day. Those who belonged to it were very proud that the Church had been established in apostolic times, of which there was abundant evidence, and, so long as it rested on the Word of God, so long would its permanency be assured. It was founded, not on man's work or man's devices, but on the Word of God, and to its great missionary work all should give ready and liberal assistance.

The Bishop of Waiapu said the chairman had put before the meeting exactly what they were commemorating that evening, but the signing of the constitution fifty years ago did not represent the introduction of Christianity into New Zealand. The work of the Church of England in this colony had begun considerably before that. Mr Marsden went to England in 1808, and put the matter before the Church Missionary Society, who decided to send out some missionaries, but it was then considered best to introduce the civil arts first, leaving the preaching of the Gospel to follow. That idea was now exploded, and it was recognised that the best policy in New Zealand was to begin with the Gospel. A number of laymen were sent out in accordance with the then policy of the society, and it was not till 1814 that the first missionaries arrived. The laymen were not missionaries but artisans, and they tried to introduce the arts of civilisation. The work of the missionaries was hindered by the introduction of firearms into the colony by some of the natives who had visited New South Wales, which led to terrible massacres by the northern Maoris on expeditions from the Bay of Islands right down to Hawke's Bay. In 1819, two missionaries arrived, but their work was not successful; but in 1823 the Rev. Henry Williams arrived with his son, the late Archdeacon Samuel Williams, then a small child. In 1825, the first baptism took place, and in 1829 others began to come in. During the latter year, a native chief named Taiwhanga decided to throw in his lot with the missionaries. As his baptism could not take place at once, he decided to have his children baptised. Among those children was Sydney Taiwhanga, whose name

would be known to many, and who was baptised at the same time that he (the Bishop) was. His Lordship traced the work of the missionaries and the gradual extension of their stations throughout the country, despite the hindrance to their operations by Maori wars and disturbances, until 1839, when matters became quieter with the last of the great tribal wars. In 1842, Bishop Selwyn came out, the colony having been founded two years previously, and the operations of the New Zealand Company having commenced in Wellington, New Plymouth and Nelson. Bishop Selwyn practically walked through New land, and, finding that there were many Church people scattered among the settlements, began to think of having some sort of constitution. He became very strongly impressed with the necessity of forming laws and regulations for the government of the Church. In 1852, he issued a pastoral address to the people, in which he outlined those laws and regulations, and meetings were held in all the settlements to consider the proposals. Considerable difficulty was experienced in connection with the proposals. In the first place, the lawyers in England did not understand the position, and some people imagined that Synod meetings could not be held without the permission of the civic authorities. In those difficulties, Bishop Selwyn received valuable assistance from prominent laymen, notably Sir William Martin and Mr William Swainson, and at last the constitution became an accomplished fact. To deal further with the life of Bishop Selwyn would be to encroach on the ground of a speaker who was to follow, and his Lordship therefore concluded by stating that he had various documents of historical interest which he would be pleased to show to anyone after the meeting.

Mr J. Thornton, of Te Aute College, delivered an address on "The Life and Work of Bishop Selwyn," but stated at the outset that it was impossible for him to give anything like a complete account of the life and labors of the first and only Bishop of New Zealand and Melanesia. Fortunately, however, the special object of the meeting limited him to one phase of Bishop Selwyn's life, namely, his work and influence on the constitution of the Church in New Zealand. Some form of Church government was imperatively necessary, alike for the native converts and for the English settlers accustomed to Church rule at Home—some means by which all should be united under one system of general control. The time had arrived for a constitution which should embrace both Maoris and colonists. The next question was how such a constitution should be

framed, a question which had already arisen in Australia, and stars were soon taken in England to supply the need. The first thing done was to appoint a bishop at an income of £1200 a year, one half to be provided by the Church Missionary Society and one half by Parliamentary grant from the public revenue of the colony. After the appointment had been refused by his elder brother, George Augustus Selwyn accepted it. It was pioneer work, and Selwyn was a born leader of men, with all the necessary qualities of physical strength, organising power, iron will, and self-control. Two years later he took the first step towards the organisation of the Church, convening a Synod of the clergy of the diocese. In 1847, another and a similar Synod was summoned. These two Synods had no foundation in constituted authority, and their actions were only of a temporary and transient nature. They were noteworthy only as paving the way towards a settled form of Church government, at which Selwyn had been aiming from the beginning of his episcopate. It had been an object he never lost sight of, but it was not till 1857, ten years after his second Synod, that it was carried into effect. The great question was: Whence should the Church of New Zealand derive its authority, from the colonial Parliament or from the Imperial Legislature in England? It became clear that there could be neither a colonial nor an Imperial State Church in New Zealand, and, if the country was to have one at all, it must be a democratic Church. "Voluntary compact" had been the term used to describe the fundamental principle of the New Zealand Church. When that principle was once established, there was no reason for further delay, and in 1857 the Bishop of New Zealand summoned a conference of bishops, clergy and laity to meet at Auckland for the purpose of framing a constitution. A select committee was appointed to draft a report showing the grounds on which the conference had been led to the conclusion that it was expedient to organise a system of self-government. The conference duly reported, with the result that on June 13th, 1857, the constitution was put forth and signed.

The Rev. D. Ruddock was the next speaker, his subject being "The Present and Future Work of the Church." He mentioned at the outset that the different dioceses in New Zealand had been established as follows:—Christchurch in 1856, Nelson in 1857, Wellington 1858, Waiapu 1859, Melanesia 1861, Dunedin 1868, and Auckland 1869. In these dioceses there were now work-