

ance at our evening meetings, and a supply of the new collection of pieces for general singing having now been procured from Dunedin, congregational singing will take its place at our future evening meetings.

WM. PRATT, C. Secretary.

CHRISTCHURCH SECULAR DEBATING SOCIETY.

The following items, kindly forwarded by the Secretary of the Christchurch Secular Debating Society, will be found interesting:—

Christchurch, 14th October, 1883.

SIR,—As most of us are subscribers to your valuable paper, and interested in the doings of like institutions, I take it that others are interested in us, and forward some particulars of last meeting on Friday evening. It was well attended, 73 being present, and opened for half an hour with recitations; after which, and until 9.30 o'clock, the resolution of the Church Synod (which is now sitting here) was ably discussed, and a resolution passed unanimously—"condemning the action taken by the Church Synod in trying to establish separate schools, thereby tending to weaken the present Education Act, and pledged itself to oppose any action that will tend to disturb the present grand system of education." It was also agreed to continue the meetings another three months, the past having been so successful, with good attendance of members. The Friday evening previous was passed most pleasantly with a ball, the first here under the auspices of Freethought; members, with "their sisters, their cousins, and their aunts," being present. A capital band, combined with a plentiful supply of refreshments, caused some 50 couples to thoroughly enjoy the evening until 12.30.—I hope your second number will have the doings of all other similar Societies in this and adjoining colonies, and trust others will forward particulars of their progress.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

ALF. H. MACLEAN, Secretary.

CONSTITUTION AND RULES.

(SUITABLE FOR ADOPTION BY FREETHOUGHT ASSOCIATIONS).

(Compiled from several sources by a member of the Wanganui Freethought Association.)

CONSTITUTION.

INSTITUTION.

Article 1.—We, the undersigned, do hereby agree to form ourselves into a Society of Freethinkers by the name of the Freethought Association.

OBJECTS.

Article 2.—The objects of the Society shall be the attainment and promulgation of knowledge as the best means for promoting the welfare and happiness of mankind.

MEMBERSHIP.

Article 3.—The Society shall consist of all who are duly enrolled members in accordance with the by-laws.

AMENDMENT.

Article 4.—The constitution of the Society may be amended by a two-thirds vote of all its members present at a regular general meeting of the members, provided the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing at a like regular meeting of the Society at least seven days before the vote is taken.

OFFICERS.

Article 5.—The officers of the Society shall consist of a President, two Vice-presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, two Trustees, and a Committee consisting of thirteen members.

BY-LAWS.

Article 6.—By-laws, not inconsistent with the constitution, may be adopted, amended, or repealed at any regular meeting of the Committee by a two-thirds vote, provided that not less than seven days' notice has been given of any such proposal to the members of the Committee. Any change of the by-laws adopted by the Committee shall be notified at the next general meeting of the Society.

CREEDS AND PRINCIPLES.

Article 7.—The Society shall not adopt any creed, articles of faith, or platform of principles.

ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

Article 8.—There shall be an annual general meeting, when the officers for the ensuing year shall be elected. The first board of officers may be elected on the day of organizing the Society without formality. Vacancies during the year may be filled by the Committee.

Article 9.—The powers of the society are unlimited, subject to its Constitution and the law of the land.

BY-LAWS.

Section 1.—Meetings: This Association shall meet regularly at

Section 2.—Ballot: The officers shall be elected by ballot, and the one receiving the highest number of votes for any office shall duly be elected.

Section 3.—Term of Office: Officers shall hold their offices one year, and until their successors are duly elected and enter upon the duties of their respective offices.

Section 4.—Vacancies: In case a vacancy shall occur by death, resignation, or in any other manner, of an officer of the Association, it may be filled *pro tem* by appointment of the President; or, in his absence, by the Committee.

Section 5.—President: The President shall be the presiding officer, and in his absence a Vice-President shall perform his duties, and in the absence of both a chairman may be elected to discharge the duties of President for the occasion.

Section 6.—Secretary: The Secretary shall keep a regular record book in which he shall enter the proceedings of all meetings of the Society, and shall perform the usual duties pertaining to the office.

Section 7.—Treasurer: The Treasurer shall keep a regular account book wherein he shall make specific entries of all money received and disbursed by order of the Association, and make a full report of his doings at each meeting of the Committee, and at such other times as may be required.

Section 8.—Trustees: The Trustees shall see to the incorporation of the Association in due and legal form under the statute, by which it will possess the right of holding property—and shall discharge all other duties devolving upon them in their office.

Section 9.—Committee: The Committee, of which all officers are ex-officio members, shall have the general management of the affairs of the Association.

Section 10.—Special meetings: Special meetings may be called by posting a notice in some conspicuous place on the building where the Association usually meets, or by advertisement in a newspaper, or written notice through the post addressed to the members individually.

Section 11.—Membership: Members may be admitted at any Committee meeting, by a majority of votes, and on the payment of the quarter's subscription of—

Section 12.—Certificate: A Certificate shall be issued to each member on joining the Association, in the following form:—This is to certify that _____ was enrolled a Member of this Association on the _____ day of _____ 188 ____.

(Signatures of President and Secretary.)

The President may at the request of a member who is leaving the district endorse the certificate testifying to the good standing of the member in that Association.

Section 13.—Special Committees: The Committee may appoint special Committees for one year of not more than five members in each, with special functions as follows:—

Finance: A Special Committee of three members on Finance.

Library: A Special Committee of three members, to take measures for establishing a Library, and have charge of same when established.

Music: A Special Committee of five members to provide for music in the meetings.

Lycum: A Special Committee of three members to take measures for opening Sunday schools under the auspices of the Association.

Benevolent Fund: A Special Committee of five lady members to administer the Benevolent Fund of the Association.

Section 14.—General Power: The Committee shall have power by resolution to make provision for any subject not provided for in the by-laws. In matters of urgency the President may decide and his decision shall have the force of a by-law. The Committee may draw up rules of debate and procedure for the regular meetings of the Association.

Passing Notes.

Launceston, Tasmania, is an orthodox place, and firm in the grip of the priests. Messrs Osborne having commenced the sale of freethought literature, they were denounced both from press and pulpit, while the police seized some of their books, and announced their intention of prosecuting the booksellers. In perhaps twenty years, Launceston will have arrived at the state of the towns of New Zealand in the matter of religious freedom.

The Christian religion still includes less than one-third of the population of the globe among its adherents. The present estimate by best German statisticians puts the total at 1,500,000,000 of whom 450,000,000 are Buddhist, 235,000,000 Mohammedan, 247,000,000 Heathen, 225,000,000 Roman Catholics, 140,000,000 Protestants, 110,000,000 Brahmims, 85,000,000 Eastern (Catholic) Churches, and 8,000,000 Jews.

The Rev. Charles Stubbs, vicar of Granborough, and author of *Village Politics*, has just sent to press with Messrs Sonnenschein a volume of sermons preached before the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. They all deal with the attitude towards social and political questions which, in the opinion of the author, the National Church must adopt if she would seek to influence the modern democratic movement in England.

The editorship of the Rolls Series of what is known as "The Tripartite Life of St Patrick," contained in Irish MSS. in the Bodleian Library and the British Museum, has been entrusted to Mr Whitley Stokes, of Oxford. The life is composed of three biographical homilies, and each homily contains a few old Irish poems and proverbial sayings. Though written in a rude, disjointed style, it has great value to the historian and philologist, and throws some light on ancient Irish institutions.