

joining its members together. They act upon instinct. Man, however, stands on a higher sphere. He is bound by the law of God to love his fellow-man. Men should do good to one another in this life, with the hope of being brothers for all eternity in the next. Jesus Christ gave us an example of this love when He laid down His life for the salvation of all, even of his enemies. A characteristic of charity is that it must be efficacious—it must be in the direction of helping the needy, and healing those who are sick, bodily and spiritually. Our love for our fellow-man must be pure, chaste, and unselfish, and must extend to all. No man should be excluded from our love and help. He was proud to see a society composed of the men of Dunedin there that morning imbued with the love Christ had for us—a society which had for its principles the command of our Divine Lord to love one another. The very reason for its existence was to do in its own way works of charity, corporal works of mercy—to help the needy, feed and clothe the hungry, and bury the dead. These are the very works which the Hibernian Society has been established to carry out. During the past year the society distributed in Dunedin the sum of £400 by way of assisting those members who were ill, or had been the victims of some other misfortune. Now, this was a splendid testimonial to the benefit of being a member of the society. By contributing a small sum weekly members are guaranteed against a rainy day, and furthermore they are strengthened and united in other ways. No other society in this city had done so much for those in need during the past year. In addition to the £400 already mentioned the society had spent nearly another £400 in doctors' fees and medicine, so that in all it distributed nearly £800 in real, true charity. No words of his could give a better testimonial to the benefits derived from membership of the society than the figures he had just given. The society was carrying out to the fullest the highest and most perfect application of fraternal charity, love, and help. He could not give a better reason for joining the society than the work which it was doing, the proof of which was given in the figures quoted. He trusted that every young man in the parish would become a member of the society, and that the fathers and mothers of young men would not rest content until their sons had joined. Not only would such have the benefit of Catholic associations, but by a small weekly contribution they would be laying up assistance for a time of need. He again appealed to all the young men to join the society and assist one another so that they may be brothers for time and for eternity.

At the conclusion of Mass the members reformed in procession and marched to St. Joseph's Hall, where the annual breakfast was laid. Rev. Father Coffey, Adm. (chaplain), presided, having on his right Bro. J. J. Marlow (P.P.), District Deputy, and on his left Bro. J. Saunders (President). There were also present Rev. Fathers Howard and Cleary, Rev. Brothers Brady and Moore, and Mrs. Jackson (St. Vincent de Paul Society), Miss Staunton (St. Joseph's Ladies' Club), Miss A. Heley (Children of Mary, St. Joseph's Cathedral), and Miss Long (Children of Mary, South Dunedin).

After justice had been done to the excellent breakfast Bro. J. Saunders thanked the members for their excellent attendance that morning.

Rev. Father Coffey then proposed the toast of the 'Pope and King,' and in doing so referred to the great interest which the Holy Father takes in Catholic societies, and paid a tribute to the broadmindedness of King Edward, and to the liberty enjoyed under his rule in these countries.

In proposing the 'H.A.C.B. Society' Father Coffey said it was unnecessary for him to say much, as he had dealt with the matter in the course of his sermon. He again impressed upon the young men the necessity of becoming members. The late Pope in his Encyclical on labor laid special stress on the advantages arising from membership of Catholic associations. The Hibernian Society deserved well of the support of the Catholic people for the work it was doing. He thought, however, some of the members were not doing as much as they ought to increase its ranks. There were now 270 members, whilst ten years ago it had only 100. The gain of 170 members in ten years was good, but it was not enough, considering the number of young men in the parish. If the older members took a more active interest in its welfare, and induced the young men to join, he considered they would be able in twelve months to double the membership. Bro. Marlow had been instrumental in starting a very successful branch in Invercargill, and would open a branch in Gore in the near future.

Bro. J. J. Marlow spoke of the necessity of having branches of the society in the smaller centres so that members from the city branches should not be lost to the society when they went

to reside in the country. The importance of this was forcibly brought under his notice quite recently. A Catholic young man who was a member of another friendly society died, and the members of that society wanted to hold a burial service over the remains at the graveside. The parents, however, did not allow it. Some time afterwards four or five Catholic young men of the place, whose character was irreproachable, were put up for membership of the same society, but they were blackballed. Other friendly societies were making strenuous efforts to obtain members at the present time, and he realised that if the Hibernian Society took up the matter in an energetic manner, the membership could be greatly increased within the next twelve months.

Bro. J. B. Callan, jun., in proposing the toast of the clergy, said it was hardly necessary, speaking to an audience of Irishmen, to refer to the good work of the clergy. Irish Catholics had always been remarkable for the strong affection which bound them to their priests, and this was as it should be. That bond of affection was created in the troublous times of the past, and continued unimpaired up to the present. They regretted the kindly presence of his Lordship the Bishop, and all trusted that he would return in good health, and would be spared for many years to preside at the society's breakfasts.

Rev. Father Howard, in replying, spoke of the dignity and responsibilities of the priesthood, and said that the office was the highest and noblest created for the public good. The longer a man labored in the sacred ministry the more he appreciated the favors conferred on him. The work of the priest in Dunedin was lightened by the generosity and goodness of the people.

Bro. T. J. Hussey proposed the Catholic press, and in doing so paid a tribute to the far-reaching influence of the *N.Z. Tablet* and the ability with which it was conducted.

Rev. Father Cleary replied.

Bro. O'Connor (secretary) proposed the 'Christian Brothers,' to which Brother Brady responded. He said that the Christian Brothers had always received the warmest encouragement from the Hibernian Society.

A vote of thanks to the Rev. Father Coffey for presiding brought the proceedings to a close.

Religious Freedom in Canada

Canada (says Gaston Maury in the *Paris Revue Bleue*) is the freest country in the world, resembling in this respect both Switzerland and Holland. Between the Catholics and Protestants of the Dominion, he declares, there has been growing up within recent times a harmony as to the religious up-bringing of the population, the like of which is not known elsewhere. All sects have begun an era of co-operation which, in sinking the vulgar sectarian prejudices of other times, bids fair to be just what Canada has hitherto lacked to make of her one of the greatest of all countries. It is unquestionable, says Maury, that Canada, in by far the greatest bulk, is religious. 'Is there another country in the world which can say that it knows of only three or four thousand professed atheists among 6,400,000 souls?

Of the ever-growing population, 2,500,000 are Catholics, the balance, nearly 4,000,000, being Protestants of different sects. It is not claimed for these that they are all, without exception, persons of devotion and piety. Nevertheless, statistics point to the fact that the practical worshippers of church-goers number over 75 per cent. Compared with Great Britain's 36 per cent., these Canadian figures are decidedly encouraging, not to say magnificent. It is also an undoubted fact that the atmosphere of Canada is religious, and that a reputation for being sceptical or anti-religious is enough to destroy an individual's hope of success in Canadian public, if not in private, business life.

The godless school is unknown in the Dominion, and a strong religious tone characterises the public teaching of all kinds, high as well as low, the Universities, in particular, showing the way in respect of special religious exercises in which all are expected to take an interest—each according to his creed. Catholicity has increased by leaps and bounds within the past quarter of a century. The convents have added largely to their membership; the male Orders—particularly the Sulpitians—have shown that they are practically a necessity, inasmuch as their teaching staffs have quadrupled in that period. The Jesuits, who although they were the real pioneers of the North, were expelled at the close of the eighteenth century, have reappeared in strong numbers, and have been received with open arms by the authorities who voted them an indemnity of 2,000,000 francs for the losses they had sustained.

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