

FEDERATED CATHOLIC CLUBS

ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

The fourteenth annual conference of the Federated Catholic Clubs of New Zealand will be held in the Catholic club rooms, Timaru, commencing on Easter Saturday, April 3, at 10 a.m.

At the conference will be held the usual annual contest for the shield, which is held at present by St. Benedict's Catholic Club, Auckland. The rules governing the contest are as follow:—Debate—The subject of the debate will be: 'Are New Zealanders justified in treating naturalised Germans as an enemy's subjects?' Each competitor will be required to prepare both sides of the debate. Sides will be drawn at the conference. Two speakers from each club. Time allowed: 1st speaker, 5 minutes; second speaker, 7 minutes. Points: 1st, 7; 2nd, 3½. Elocution—Subject—Own choice. One speaker from each club. No competitor to give an item with which he has won a first prize in a public competition. Time allowed: 7 minutes. Points: 1st, 6; 2nd, 3. Billiards—One competitor from each club. Games 50 up, and final 100 up. Points: 1st, 4; 2nd, 2. Tennis—One competitor from each club. Games 30 up, singles only. Points: 1st, 4; 2nd, 2. Religious section—The questions are as follow: (1) Why do Catholics go to confession? (2) What is meant by Papal Infallibility? (3) What is the *Ne Temere* Decree? Are mixed marriages absolutely forbidden? (4) What does the Catholic Church think of Socialism? (5) Why does the Church condemn Freemasonry? (6) Has the Church always encouraged the Arts and Sciences? (7) Can Catholics justify the Inquisition? (8) Is one religion as good as another? (9) To whom do we owe the existence of the Bible? (10) Why do Catholics build and maintain their own schools, when free schools are open to them? The procedure to be adopted is that each competitor will be required to answer orally any one question, the time limit being set at 5 minutes. The marks assigned for this section will be the same as those for the debating section.

The following are the items of general interest in the agenda paper:—Notices of motion. (a) St. Benedict's Catholic Club to move—(1) 'That in years to come or in future years, a shooting competition be included in the syllabus of competitions for the shield contest.' (2) 'That rule 6 be altered as follows: the word "Wellington" occurring in the second last line be deleted, and the word "Auckland" be substituted therefor.' (b) Federal Executive to move—(1) 'That there be no limit to the number of vice-presidents on the Federal Executive.' (2) 'That for the purpose of providing prizes for competitions, and assisting the finances of the Federation, a biennial art union be held.' Report *re* publication of the *Catholic Magazine*. Written reports (on the past year's work) from (a) affiliated clubs: (b) district representatives. Suggestions by delegates for the improvement of the Federation and of its constituent clubs. New Zealand Catholic Federation, St. Vincent de Paul Society, Catholic Seamen's Conference, H.A.C.B. Society, boys' clubs. The desirability of mutual co-operation in extending the membership and participating in the work of these societies. Catholic Social Guild course. Question of Federal Executive taking over Social Guild study scheme in New Zealand, and also taking over the work of holding the examinations in connection therewith. The hon. secretary will read correspondence between the editor of the *New Zealand Tablet* and executive.

The following is a synopsis of the annual report:—During the past year there have been no new clubs admitted to the Federation. This is due, no doubt, to the slackness that exists in club affairs, owing, in a measure, to the war. Following upon instruction from last conference your executive communicated with

various parish priests requesting them to take steps for the formation of Catholic Clubs in their respective parishes. In only one or two cases, however, replies were received, but it is hoped the action taken by your executive will bear good fruit. Your executive also communicated with the existing Clubs at Oamaru, Hawera, South Dunedin, and St. Joseph's, Dunedin, to ascertain if they would affiliate. The aims and objects of the Federation were brought under their notice, but no good results have as yet been attained. We trust, however, that the time will not be long before these clubs will join the strong chain of affiliation. Several of the affiliated clubs have been very inactive during the past term, but considering the serious depletion of their ranks on account of so many joining the Expeditionary Forces, some justification doubtless exists for such inactivity. The attitude that has been displayed by clubs in connection with these competitions is not to be encouraged. It is much to be regretted that no results were received in the oratorical competition. Regarding the general knowledge competitions only five returns came to hand, and the results will be announced later. A diploma has been issued to Mr. C. J. Lenihan, past secretary of Federation, for meritorious services. Very Rev. Father O'Connell has been appointed spiritual director. The following resignations have been received by the executive with extreme regret:—Messrs. C. Gamble (vice-president) and A. J. Ridler (hon. secretary) resigned to join the Expeditionary Forces, and Mr. W. B. Keany (treasurer), on account of pressure of business. Mr. T. H. Forster was elected hon. secretary, and Mr. Galvin an executive member, in place of Mr. Ridler on active service, and the position of treasurer was filled by the unanimous election of Mr. E. B. L. Reade. The executive takes this opportunity of placing on record its sense of appreciation of the good work done and the time so gratuitously given by Messrs. Gamble, Ridler, and Keany. Arrangements in connection with the publication of the *Magazine* are satisfactory. A suitable date for publication will shortly be fixed. At present twenty-four clubs constitute the Federation, and only seven so far have paid subscriptions for 1914-15, despite reminders. Eliminating the outstanding subscriptions from the balance sheet, there remains an actual debit balance of £2 9s 9d. The Federation depends solely on subscriptions to meet actual working expenses. During the past eight months the Catholic clubs as a body have suffered great loss owing to the departure of great numbers of Catholic young men with the Expeditionary Forces, but it is hoped that this state of affairs will not continue, and that all will return safely. The executive wishes to thank the clubs generally for such assistance as has been given it during the past year, and earnestly hopes that all clubs will, during the coming year, put new life and activity into their work, and co-operate with the executive in the affiliation of new clubs.

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