

M.B.O.B. ASSOCIATION, CHRISTCHURCH

(From our own correspondent.)

The annual church parade of the Marist Brothers' Old Boys' Association took place on Sunday morning, June 22 (Solemnity of the Feast of Corpus Christi), at the Cathedral. A splendid muster of 250, including the Senior School Cadets under Lieutenant Amos, and led by the club's president, Sir George Clifford, Bart., approached the Holy Table. The Mass was celebrated by Father Kilbride, C.S.S.R., and Very Rev. Dr. Kennedy, Adm., assisted at the Communion. In a few appropriate remarks the Very Rev. Administrator said that, with the parishioners, he was most edified at the fine manifestation of faith then being witnessed—a spectacle of which any church in the Dominion might well be proud—and he expressed his gratitude to the Marist Brothers, whose labors were rewarded in such a striking manner. That his Lordship the Bishop was absent on the occasion was regrettable (he said) inasmuch as the sight then presented would have cheered his heart. Breakfast was served in the Hibernian Hall, with the aid of the members of St. Matthew's (ladies') branch of the H.A.C.B. Society. Sir George Clifford presided, and among those present were Father Murphy (chaplain), Dr. P. A. Ardagh (hon. surgeon to the association), Lieutenant Amos, Sergeants-Major Pound and O'Sullivan, Rev. Brothers Justin and Phelan, representatives of the Hibernian Society (St. Mary's and St. Patrick's branches), Catholic Federation, and Catholic Club, and Mr. J. Dickson.

In proposing the toast "The Pope and King," the president said that his task naturally brought before him the great doctrine of obedience to authority as taught by the Catholic Church. The toast was enthusiastically received. Mr. T. P. O'Rourke, in proposing "The Bishop and Clergy," referred to the debt of gratitude owed by the association to his Lordship Bishop Brodie and his devoted priests for the ready assistance given by them to every movement tending to its advancement. Father Murphy (who wore uniform as army chaplain), in replying, read a telegram received from his Lordship the Bishop conveying greetings and congratulations to the assemblage. Father Murphy paid a tribute to the "glorious dead" of the association, who had conducted themselves so nobly on the battlefields of Europe. To see the Cadets in such fine numbers was to him (their chaplain) a great source of pleasure, and he trusted that they, as well as the other sections of M.B.O.B.A., would ever remain loyal to the teaching and influence of the Marist Brothers.

Mr. P. Amodeo, to whom was entrusted the toast "The Marist Brothers," said that owing to his personal acquaintance with many of them he was doubly proud of the privilege given him that morning. Some of the Brothers who had been present at previous gatherings of the kind in Christchurch were now located in various parts of the Dominion, but there was pleasure in remembrance. Their work as educationalists, and the excellent service rendered to the country by them during the epidemic, would live for ever in the minds of a grateful people. Rev. Brother Justin, in reply, thanked the proposer for his kindly words, and assured his hearers that the fine manifestation of faith that morning was the greatest pleasure that could possibly be given the Brothers for their efforts in the schools. He wished to impress upon them two things that had often been placed before the boys when at school—assisting at Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation, and the frequent reception of the Sacraments.

Mr. M. Grimes, speaking to the toast of "The M.B.O.B. Association," reviewed its development under adverse circumstances, and the great services rendered by Rev. Brother Walter (to whom was due the work of formation), Brothers Calixtus, Palladius, and the present director, Brother Justin. Mr. P. Greenlees (secretary), replying on behalf of his associates, gave a fine report of the now flourishing state of the association, and thanked Dr. Ardagh for having so generously placed his services at the disposal of members. To Messrs. T. Cahill, P. O'Connell, and Lieutenant Amos he extended the thanks of members for their assistance in decorating and furnishing the hall for the function, and he wished to express appreciation of Sir George Clifford's presence, and of his general interest in the association. On behalf of the football teams, the popular captain (D. McCormick) thanked all who were so keenly interested in the sporting side of the association.

In proposing "Absent Friends," Mr. J. Mullins said that under this heading were playing and non-playing members, many of whom were away from Christchurch, and many more had crossed the great divide. Recent losses by death were Messrs. F. O'Malley, P. Gregory, and James Power. Those connected with the early history of the association did not forget the enthusiasm and self-sacrifice exerted in its welfare by Mr. Power, whose memory would ever remain respected. Mr. Frank Smyth, in supplementing the remarks of Mr. Mullins, said he had tried, when at the Front, to carry out the desire expressed to him at his departure, of continuing to be captain of the Old Boys in France. On many occasions it had been his lot in going to the various companies inquiring for old comrades, to hear they had been killed. Boys of the M.B.O.B. Association were (he said) buried along the whole line of the British front from Ypres to the Somme, amongst them being many of the most promising footballers that had ever been in the ranks of the organisation. Our duty towards those departed comrades was to remember them in our prayers.

Mr. M. Kennedy, in proposing the toast of "The Ladies," spoke of the services rendered by their lady friends to the association since its formation, the success of their social functions being due to this earnest goodwill. Miss D. Smyth, in responding, said their success was sufficient reward for anything the ladies had been able to do in the interests of the association. She congratulated the members on the magnificent display witnessed that morning, and wished them every success.

Lieutenant Amos spoke of the fine spirit existing amongst the Cadets, and paid a tribute to Color-Sergeant Pepper, who, though not a Catholic, had been a tower of strength to him (the speaker) in his work.

Rev. Brother Phelan then presented Color-Sergeant Pepper with a token of esteem from the Brothers and boys amongst whom he had labored so energetically, and wished him every success in the higher grade of defence work upon which he was now entering. The recipient, in a neat speech, thanked the Brothers for their recognition, and said that the M.B.O.B. Cadets were the finest company with whom he had been associated.

Mr. P. J. Smyth referred in eulogistic terms to the military officers present at the breakfast—Sergeants-Major Pound and O'Sullivan—who had shown such a deep interest in the welfare of the boys. The work of the former (a non-Catholic) in connection with Nazareth House was well known, and, on behalf of the association, tendered heartiest thanks to those officers. In replying, Messrs. Pound and O'Sullivan showed the advantage of having a Catholic Cadet Corps, and expressed their intention to do all in their power to prevent our lads being drafted into other units in the future.

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