

Mr. James McKenna moved, and Mr. Charles Carroll seconded, a vote of thanks to the rev. lecturer, which was carried with acclamation. Rev. Father Wright, in replying, said, whenever his parochial duties permitted he would be pleased to lecture to club members and friends.

Otaguhu

(From an occasional correspondent.)

August 10.

The social gathering held recently in connection with the Catholic Club was an unqualified success. There were about 230 persons present, many of whom had journeyed from Auckland, Onehunga, Ellerslie, Panmure, and Manurewa. The hall was decorated in the club colors—purple and white. Messrs. W. Whitelaw, G. Rogers, E. McGaughran, and J. Brennan, with Mr. C. McCrory, who acted as secretary, left nothing to be desired. The supper room presented a pleasing appearance, the tables and room being also decorated in the club colors. The arrangements and the decorations of the tables reflected great credit on the artistic tastes of the lady friends of the members. Financially, the social was one of the most successful functions ever held in the district.

Invercargill

(From our own correspondent.)

August 14.

The meetings of the local branch of the Hibernian Society are now held in Allen's Hall in Kelvin street. Previously the members used to meet in St. Joseph's schoolroom, which was inconvenient in many ways, and not so central as the present rooms. On the 11th inst. the first meeting was held in the new hall, and at the conclusion of the business for the evening Mr. T. McGrath entertained the members.

This morning's *Southland Times* has the following account of the forthcoming art union of the Hibernian Band:—The Hibernian Band played a programme of Sousa's music in front of Chiaroni's Art Depot on Saturday evening. The band's art union prizes, which were on view in the Art Depot window, attracted a lot of attention, and tickets in connection therewith were disposed of in large numbers by members of the band.

NEWMAN SOCIETY, WELLINGTON

THE EDUCATION QUESTION

(From our Wellington correspondent.)

The monthly meeting of the Newman Society was held at St. Patrick's College on Sunday afternoon, August 6. Mr. S. J. Moran, LL.B., presided. There was a large attendance of the members and the local clergy.

The Education Question: Some Unconsidered Phases, was the subject of a very interesting and able paper read by Mr. P. J. O'Regan. Mr. O'Regan argued that, whether we admitted the fact or not, we were all, either socialists or individualists. In calling himself an individualist he was blind neither to the truths involved in socialism nor to the cold indifference to social injustice which ordinarily passed for individualism. He maintained that human rights existed independently of organised government and that, no matter how complex human society might become, it was governed by the same natural laws as society in its rudest beginnings. Inasmuch as human society existed long before the State in the modern sense was known, it would be absurd to argue that in ante-State times men had no rights. The truth was that men's rights were always the same, and hence that the proper function of government was to protect them—it had no moral jurisdiction either to curtail or diminish them, unless to restrain aggression and punish violence. In times preceding the existence of the State, education

was obviously the function of the individual parent; and hence it followed that, if the State could acquire the right to educate, it could only do so by the free delegation of the parents; secondly, if some parents chose to surrender or delegate their duty in this connection to the State, that could not rightfully bind parents who dissented. The lecturer then showed that men like Thomas Paine, Herbert Spencer, and John Bright regarded education as the function of the parent, because they were individualists, while John Stuart Mill, who was also an individualist, was opposed to the State monopolising education. Hence it was apparent that men's views on the subject in reality depended on the manner in which they regarded the phenomena of the State and the principles of political economy. The onus lay heavily on advocates of State monopoly of education to prove their position historically, for if the parent had surrendered his right to the State, history must show when, where, and how. History, however, was silent on the point. Mr. O'Regan next pointed out the important bearing in this connection of the problem of taxation. Hampden could never have resisted the imposition of ship money had it been an indirect tax, and likewise the English Nonconformists could never have paralysed the administration of the Education Act of 1903, but for the fact that direct education rates were levied locally. This fact—that education was paid for largely by local rates—made it much more difficult to adopt 'the secular solution' in England or Canada than some of the critics appeared to imagine, for the weapon used by the Nonconformist was open to others. A considerable portion of the paper was devoted to proportional representation of which the lecturer declared himself a strong advocate. He explained at length how proportional representation would secure the proper representation of minorities, and hence that Catholic opinion, which was now practically disfranchised, could express itself adequately and constitutionally in connection with such questions as education and divorce. He declared himself as opposed to any political action in connection with these questions while the present absurd system of representation existed; but predicted the early triumph of the movement for proportional representation. He also insisted that there was in the discovery of scientific truth a necessary chronological order of co-ordination. Thus, could we trace the history of the mathematical sciences, it would be found that logic preceded arithmetic, that arithmetic preceded algebra, that algebra preceded geometry, that geometry preceded statics, and so on until the circle of mathematical truth had been completed. Then out of these sciences had grown others such as astronomy, geography, and navigation, and certainly without navigation, civilisation in the modern sense could never have come into existence. The same truth held good in all other branches of knowledge. Proportional representation was based on the natural rights of minorities, or, in fact, of the representation of everybody who had the right to vote. Once it was applied in practice, other questions, now impossible of treatment, would range themselves in the sphere of the practical. Accordingly the question of scientific representation was of vital importance to Catholics.

The paper was appreciatively discussed, and the lecturer was accorded a hearty vote of thanks on the motion of the Rev. Father Bartley, S.M., seconded by Rev. Father C. J. Venning, S.M.

Owing to his protracted absence from Wellington Mr. Thos. Boyce has resigned the secretaryship of the Society. Miss Mellsop has been appointed to fill the vacancy.

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