

FEDERATED CATHOLIC CLUBS OF NEW ZEALAND

TWELFTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The twelfth annual conference of the Federated Catholic Clubs of New Zealand commenced its sittings at the rooms of the Christchurch Catholic Club on Saturday morning, April 22. The representation of clubs was as follows:—Auckland, Mr. W. Thomas; Newton (Auckland), Messrs. F. G. J. Temm and G. Dobbs; Waihi and Thames, Mr. J. J. A. Callaghan; Wellington, Messrs. M. O'Kane and G. Dee; Wellington South, Mr. M. O'Kane; Christchurch, Messrs. F. Rowe and P. McNamara; Ashburton, Mr. W. J. Cunningham; Timaru, Mr. D. O'Halloran; Waimate, Mr. J. S. Lawlor; Greymouth, Messrs. B. J. Rasmussen and J. Deere; Westport, Messrs. J. Minehan and C. A. Carmine; Hokitika, Messrs. W. E. Jones and F. Duffy; Federation Executive, Messrs. A. H. Casey and C. A. Carmine. Owing to the absence of the president and vice-president, Mr. A. H. Casey was elected chairman.

On behalf of the Executive, Mr. Casey extended a hearty welcome to the assembled delegates and urged them to devote themselves zealously and assiduously to the work of the conference. There were, he said, many important proposals for discussion, and he trusted, therefore, that their deliberations and decisions would be productive of great benefit to the cause of Catholicity and Catholic clubs in New Zealand, and that the conference would be memorable as marking a new era in the progress of the federation.

Rev. Father O'Boyle, on behalf of the clergy of Christchurch, welcomed the delegates, and in doing so pointed out the many advantages derivable from membership of a Catholic club, and the good which such clubs are capable of doing in the interests of the Church. Father O'Boyle, whose words of encouragement and advice were much appreciated by the delegates, concluded by wishing the conference a most successful session, and the delegates a pleasant stay in Christchurch.

Mr. E. T. Harper (president of the Christchurch Club) expressed the great pleasure which he and his club had in welcoming the delegates to the club rooms. He had no doubt that the conference would be a success, as also the first annual competitions for the Federation Shield. He extended a cordial invitation to the delegates to avail themselves fully of the privileges and facilities of the local club, which, he said, desired that the stay of the visitors be made as pleasant as possible.

The chairman then read the presidential address, in which reference was made to the desirability of more active co-operation on the part of clubs with the Executive. The present position of the federation was, in the opinion of the president (Mr. H. McKeown) not altogether satisfactory. Several clubs needed strengthening, and greater attention should be paid to correspondence sent forward by the Executive, and to the punctual payment of subscriptions. The address concluded by wishing the conference a session full of practical result to the federation, regret being expressed by the president at his absence from the deliberations.

The chairman reported that the Executive hoped to receive at an early date applications to join the federation from clubs recently established at Hamilton and Wrey's Bush.

The annual report and balance sheet, the adoption of which was moved by the chairman, stated that several of the affiliated clubs had not led a very active existence during the past season. The executive trusted that these clubs would infuse more enthusiasm into their work during the forthcoming term. Diplomas for improvement in debating and for distinguished services in club work had been awarded to several members. Feeling reference was made to the loss sustained by the federation in the death of its revered

spiritual director, Rev. Father C. J. Venning, S.M. The finances of the federation, though small, were satisfactory, though several clubs had neglected payment of subscriptions.

The motion for the adoption of the report and balance sheet, which was seconded by Mr. Temm, was opposed by Mr. Callaghan, who criticised adversely the work of the outgoing Executive, with the personnel of which his club (Waihi) was not satisfied. Messrs. O'Halloran and O'Kane were also of opinion that the Executive had not been active enough in various matters during the past term. Messrs. Temm, Rasmussen, Dobbs, and Carmine agreed that much of the fault lay with individual clubs and club secretaries and not with the Executive, whose work during the past term did not merit the criticism of the previous speakers. Mr. Casey in reply answered effectively the various points of objection, and, on putting the motion, declared the same carried by a large majority.

Mr. O'Halloran, on behalf of the Timaru Club, moved a new rule—'That districts be constituted comprising such clubs as are conveniently accessible to one another, the work of which clubs, particularly with reference to federation matters, shall be supervised by respective district representatives. The districts and the first set of district representatives shall be arranged by this conference, and thereafter such district representatives shall be appointed by the clubs in the respective districts.' This proposal received general approval, as being calculated to aid considerably in strengthening the federation, and after some discussion (in which Messrs. Thomas, Rasmussen, Cunningham, Callaghan, Carmine, and Casey took part) the motion was carried, with a slight amendment deputing the incoming executive, after communicating with the various clubs, to arrange the districts and the first set of district representatives. It was further resolved 'that the club in the town in which each district representative resides be recommended to appoint him as its delegate to the annual conference, but failing such appointment such district representative be entitled to attend and take part in the deliberations of the annual conference, but without power to vote.'

A further motion by the Timaru Club—'That any member of an affiliated club, wheresoever situated, shall (if otherwise qualified) be eligible for election as president'—was lost by a large majority, only Messrs. Callaghan, O'Kane, and O'Halloran voting in its favor. The opinion was expressed by Mr. Casey, and concurred in by Messrs. Minehan and Dobbs, that it was essential and in the best interests of the Federation that the president be an active, zealous officer and leader residing in Wellington (the headquarters of the Executive) and not merely the holder of a position of honor. A contingent motion, providing for the election of a chairman to preside at Executive meetings in the event of the president residing outside Wellington, was negatived *pro forma*.

Mr. O'Halloran (for the Timaru Club) next moved to alter the time for holding the annual conference, from Easter to 'such time as the clubs shall be in active session (i.e. during the winter months).' This motion, which was supported by Messrs. Dobbs, Minehan, Temm, and Cunningham, and opposed by Messrs. Callaghan, Carmine, McNamara, and Casey, was lost.

Auckland Catholic Club, through its delegate, Mr. Thomas, then moved an alteration of rule to provide that the annual conference be held at Christchurch, Auckland, Wellington, and Dunedin alternately, instead of, as at present, at Christchurch and Wellington alternately. An amendment was moved by Mr. Carmine (Westport) providing that the annual conference shall be held at such place as is selected by the immediately preceding conference. The motion was supported by Messrs. Callaghan, Cunningham, and O'Halloran, whilst Messrs. Dobbs, Temm, O'Kane, Rowe, and Rasmussen preferred the terms of the amendment. Mr. Casey, on behalf of the Federal Executive, contended strongly for the retention of the present system of holding the conference at Christchurch and Wellington alternately, such system having, he said, been adopted by the 1910 conference after