

HOKITIKA

A new branch of the H.A.C.B. Society was opened at Hokitika on Monday, June 2, by the District Deputy (Mr. N. Milligan, of Denniston). The opening ceremony was performed in a business-like manner. Several members of the Greymouth branch were present to give a helping hand, and to encourage the new members in their welcome endeavours. Mr. N. Milligan presided, supported on his right by Bro. P. J. Smyth, and on his left by Bros. T. Keenan (president of the the Greymouth branch) and J. Keating (acting secretary). The proceedings opened with prayer, offered by the chaplain (Rev. Father Clancy), after which Mr. Milligan, in a few words, expressed his unfeigned pleasure in extending the scope of the Hibernian Society by laying the foundation stone of another edifice whose erection would advance the cause of religion, shelter its members from many dangers, strengthen by the bonds of charity the various units of Holy Church, and combine the divided energies and scattered forces in one grand army that would do noble work for faith and fatherland in our fair Dominion. As the programme of initiation was lengthy, the chairman's remarks were brief; accordingly the work was expedited, so that all the preliminaries and formalities were well in hand by 10 o'clock. The election of officers resulted as follows: President, Bro. N. T. Warren; vice-president, Bro. R. Whaley; secretary, Bro. W. Pickering; warden, Bro. J. Cahill; guardian, Bro. L. Dwan; visitors, Bros. G. Head and G. Dee; treasurer, Bro. W. Jones. The various officers were congratulated by the District Deputy. He trusted that each one would endeavour to specialise in his own department, thus to secure the aims of the society and spread its spirit.

The new president, Bro. N. T. Warren, in reply, voiced the feelings of lawful pride for the trust reposed in him and his executive. He could assure the members that all would strive to prove themselves worthy of the offices to which they had been raised. Concluding amidst rounds of acclamation, he invited all present to honor him by their presence at a banquet which was laid in St. Mary's Clubrooms. The invitation was accepted, and about eighty sat down to a generous spread. The long line of tables was profusely decorated with flowers, the whole reflecting the highest credit on Misses K. V. Foster and L. Kortegast, and other willing assistants.

The following toasts were duly honored:—'The Pope and King'—'The King and Pope.' 'The Rev. Chaplain' was proposed by Mr. N. Milligan in a very felicitous speech, which was responded to by the Rev. Father Clancy. The 'H.A.C.B. Society' was proposed by Bro. Keenan, who in a very happy speech outlined the chief work of the society, and dwelt on the necessity of organisation. He most heartily congratulated the new branch, and said he entertained the highest hopes for the fulfilment of all its legitimate aspirations. Mr. N. Milligan (D.D.) replied, outlining

the means necessary to secure success, he appealed to all to take a broad view of the scope of such a society, and, whilst abiding in a spirit of charity with all men, never sacrifice one iota of principle to gain any passing advantage.

Rev. Father Clancy proposed the toast of the 'District Deputy.' He trusted God would grant him health and strength to promote the interest of the society. He looked upon Mr. Milligan's life and antecedents as a concrete refutation of the contentions of anyone who would narrow its activities to an insular or parochial corner of the earth. Born in the north-west of England, his life had been a conflict for the faith. Assailed on all sides, he sought in his isolation for some organisation that would safeguard his faith and promote its interests. He found such in this widespread organisation, that numbers amongst its most devoted supporters men of every nation. As in the army, whose object was national defence, we find regiments of all nationalities and from different lands—regiments that cling to their historic feats, and glory in the remembrance of their martial heroes, so likewise in the Hibernian Society there is ample scope for every member to pride himself in his ancestral associations whilst advancing the glorious cause of religion. The Pole will find admirers for his noble country amongst his brother Hibernians. They are the proud upholders of every principle of justice and equality that has built up the great Republic of America: that has signalised the victory of the Centre Party in the Fatherland; they rejoice in a united Catholic France to-day; and the English Empire will find no more fearless exponents than they are of justice and freedom: nor are they apt to forget their gratitude to Ireland.

In reply, Bro. Milligan acknowledged the toast with thanks. He trusted the bairn new-born, the Benjamin of the family, would soon wax strong. He accepted cordially the Celtic cross donated by the members as a souvenir of the occasion.

In reply to the toast of the local branch, Bro. N. T. Warren (president) dwelt on the felicity of its name—Robert Emmet. Of English and Irish extraction, like some of his English ancestors he was if anything *Hibernior ipsis Hibernicis*. He was a New Zealander, too, and yielded to none in love for his own country; but he was there, too, as Hibernian to extract what was best from every nationality. When Moore sang 'Let Erin remember,' Emmet, enchanted with the old melody, hoped some day to head 10,000 Irishmen welded in solid phalanx. Give me 10,000 Hibernians, said the youthful president, and I will settle our claims for justice not by bloodshed but by the leverage of such a powerful association. He had always admired the disinterested unselfish devotion of Emmet; his chequered career was the theme of the historian; his love-story appealed to the poet; but his life, his motives, nay, even his very failure, would endear him to the noble-hearted and true.

The meeting was brought to a conclusion with the singing of 'Auld lang syne.'

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