

CORRESPONDENCE

[We do not hold ourselves responsible for opinions expressed by our correspondents.]

A NEW ZEALAND CATHOLIC BENEFIT SOCIETY.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—On picking up your issue of July 3, I was highly amused with the letter written by your correspondent, Francis de Silva, in urging Dean Darby's formation of a New Zealand Catholic Benefit Society. Now, I happen to be (although a German) a member of the H.A.C.B. Society, and a past-president of branch No. 95, Wellington. I cannot see any reason for people of other nationalities, and New Zealanders in particular, objecting to the name Hibernian, for to me the name Hibernian is so closely connected with religion that I find it difficult to see that anyone should want to separate them.

My object in mentioning the office I held is to show thereby, that, no matter to what nationality a man may belong, he can attain to any office in the H.A.C.B. Society.—I am, etc.,

O. KROHN.

Parade, Island Bay, July 12.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—The sudden silence of the opposition to a New Zealand Catholic Benefit Society is remarkable, to me it denotes weakness. It would appear that the opposition find this mode of action the safest way out of a difficult question. Whatever replies have been written on their side have been dictated by a very narrow spirit, and some even were of very questionable taste. The opposition have tried to hide the real issue by denoting those in sympathy with a New Zealand Catholic Benefit Society as *anti-Irish*, and suggesting that at heart the move was *anti-Irish*. This has been done for a purpose, forsooth to throw dust in the eyes of those who would otherwise see through the lines, and having seen, would be generous enough, to speak the truth. It has certainly made it more difficult for the genuine Irishman to pick his steps, but in a little time the way will be clear. In all such discussion as the present one, it is necessary to distinguish between the *opportunist* and the *thinker*. The one seeks what is popular and proclaims it in a raucous voice; the other seeks what is bed-rock principle, and like the rock is often silent but more often solid. The one keeps his eyes fixed on the ascendancy party, the other is content to strive for truth, remembering that 'the truth will make you free.' The one fears a New Zealand Catholic Benefit Society might injure the H.A.C.B. Society, therefore let it drop. He seems to forget that the H.A.C.B. Society in New Zealand is already in a moribund condition, but prefers this state, vainly clinging to the ascendancy idea, content to die rather of slow starvation, than, like a generous and wise man, to hearken to the wants of the time, to listen to the call of the tens of thousands of our Catholic youth for a society that gives place to the ideals of their own country. Surely, there is here a rare chance for a great Irishman to rise above the dead level of his countrymen in New Zealand, to show he can grasp a great opportunity calling for a great man, and whilst he proclaims he has a heart that bleeds for the wrongs of his own native land, that great heart beats in sympathy with the aspirations of his adopted country. How comes it that the opposition is so blinded, as to see such a magnificent opportunity before them, to help the children of their adopted country—a country that has been so lavish to them who came to seek their fortunes,—yet as an opposition determined to oppress and reject the ideals of the native-born of this same country? In truth they say to us: We have feasted on your bread and drunk your wine and have waxed fat on the fulness thereof, but we are Irishmen and want Irish ideals to be first in your country, but as to the ideals of the native-born we wish them to go unnoticed. Of those who have adopted our country is

there then no mind sufficiently great to rise above this sordid state of things, sufficiently strong to brush to one side the evangel of the *Little Irelanders*, and sufficiently generous to throw in their lot with the native-born and help not to throw down but to lift up; not to obscure, but to elucidate those ideals of the native-born, when already so many good fruits have ripened on those ideals, and when the greatest statesman New Zealand has had, having left his own land and lived the greater part of his life in our land, and filled with admiration for his adopted country, filled also with gratitude to her for her past goodness to him, and when on his last visit to Australia, which country though separated from us by the broad ocean, yet could appreciate the greatness of our statesman, invited him to settle in their land, to which invitation he happily and feelingly replied, 'He was going back to God's Own Country.'—I am, etc.,

JOSEPH CROKE DARBY,
Dean of Waikato.

The Deanery, St. Mary's, Hamilton,
July 13, 1913.

THE CONCERT PLATFORM.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—Rightly or wrongly, I have always held the opinion, and shall continue to do so all my life, that the beauty of a song consists, not only in the melody, but also in the story it tells, consequently I have always wondered what species of conceit, or what species of idiocy, causes our colonial singers, when singing to a colonial audience, to do so in a foreign language, presumably Italian, but as much like the genuine article as the barking of a fox terrier after an unhappy cat.

I have not altered my mind in the least as to the necessity of the story being told in the song, but I have now come to the conclusion, that it is neither conceit nor idiocy that actuates our colonial performers in their choice of a language—it is cuteness. The ordinary 'wood and water Joey' type of a musician can detect faulty enunciation when a song is sung in the mother tongue, and so as not to give him a chance of finding fault, our young people make vocal sounds of which neither they nor their audience have the least idea of the meaning.

It often occurs to me what would the residents of the shores of the Mediterranean say, if they heard the murderous pronunciation of their language; but our singers when performing there, would be most careful to use only the Anglo-Saxon, which would be just as intelligible to our continental friends as the colonial 'Ilytalian' is to us.—I am, etc.,

A. C. NOTTINGHAM.

Halswell, July 16.

Lower Hutt

(From an occasional correspondent.)

The half-yearly meeting of SS. Peter and Paul's branch of the Hibernian Society was held on July 9, when there was a record attendance. The question of forming a new district was discussed. Bros. J. W. Callaghan and J. Bourke addressed the meeting on the question. On it being put to the meeting only two votes were recorded against the motion in favor of forming a new district. The election of officers resulted as follows:—President, Bro. W. Gleeson; vice-president, Bro. J. W. Ryan; treasurer, Bro. D. Hickey; secretary, Bro. C. J. O'Brien; warden, Bro. A. Conroy; guardian, Bro. P. Evans.

Let politicians rave and rant,
And say there's no such thing as cant;
I don't believe it, sir—do you?
They're all a money-hunting crew.
But what I do believe for sure
Is that Woods' Great Peppermint Cure
Will build you up and make you strong,
Secure from colds your whole life long.