

Commonwealth Notes

NEW SOUTH WALES.

The celebrations at St. Mary's Cathedral in October this year, though held in Sydney, will have an interest for every Catholic within the four seas of Australia (says the *Catholic Press*). The note of triumph and exultation will be struck by all partisans by reason of the growth of things Catholic throughout the whole Commonwealth. One hundred years ago the Catholic Church in Australia was but commencing, and that in a very humble way. There were a few hundred Catholics in the convict settlement, but they hungered eagerly for the Sacraments and the consolations of religion. There was but one priest who, endowed with exceptional courage and resourcefulness, struggled against prejudice and anti-Catholic legislation to fulfil what we know to be the fundamental duty of a pastor, to administer the Sacraments and offer the Holy Sacrifice for his much-tried flock. The hospitality of the free settlers in Sydney and the nearer country districts enabled him somewhat to carry out his priestly duties; but he realised that a church was a necessity. He had no means, and so we find him presenting a memorial to the Governor, asking for a site for a chapel; it was only after he had been more than 12 months in the colony that a grant was made of a piece of land which would not conflict with the susceptibilities of the leaders of the Established Church. He accepted the gift of a plot of land outside the town proper, and began the building of a church; but he still had to depend on the clemency of the convict gaolers to permit volunteers to work upon the structure. In October, 1921, the new chapel was commenced, and St. Mary's stands as a memorial of the zeal of Father Therry, and of the Faith and devotedness of the Catholics of the colony.

VICTORIA.

To inaugurate the H.A.C.B. Society Golden Jubilee celebrations, a conversazione was held in the Cathedral Hall on Friday night, September 2 (says the *Tribune*, Melbourne). The Archbishop of Melbourne (Most Rev. Dr. Mannix) and the Archbishop of Wellington (Most Rev. Dr. Redwood) honored the gathering by their presence. Bro. J. J. P. Strafford (grand pres.) extended a hearty welcome to his Grace Most Rev. Dr. Mannix and his Grace Most Rev. Dr. Redwood to the first official gathering of the Hibernians since Dr. Mannix's return. He assured his Grace of their continued loyalty and devotion to him. They deeply sympathised with him in the sorrow and misfortune of not being able to visit Ireland. Still, he had been thus enabled to reach the democracy of England, and put before them the claims of Ireland. Archbishop Redwood was an Englishman who loved his native land, but still had sympathy with Ireland. His Grace was a great citizen of New Zealand and the oldest member of the H.A.C.B. Society in New Zealand. He had become a member in 1875, nearly fifty years ago.

Bro. Strafford also welcomed the representatives of the various Catholic and Irish societies who were present. That night's function was only the beginning of the golden jubilee celebrations of the H.A.C.B.S. It was 50 years since the society had been established. Before 1871 there had been several societies working in different directions. Though various amendments had been made from time to time the ideals of the society were the same as they had been 50 years ago. The first essential was that every member be a practical Catholic. He must also be a good Australian and a good Irishman. Hibernians had never dictated to Ireland what policy she should follow, but they had always supported her in her claims. When Home Rule had been the policy of Ireland the H.A.C.B.S. had stood behind her, and now when nothing short of self-determination would do, they still supported her. As the members were good Catholics and good Irishmen, it naturally followed that they were good Australians. That had been shown by the large number of members who had joined the Australian Forces in the war, and 153 had made the supreme sacrifice.

His Grace Most Rev. Dr. Mannix, who was received with enthusiasm, said that he was very much obliged to the speakers who had referred to him in such eulogistic

terms. He was grateful for the opportunity of assisting at the very beginning of the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Hibernian Society. He had promised already to take part in the Sydney celebrations. His Grace Archbishop Redwood really had more right than he (Dr. Mannix) to be present that night, for they had been told he had been a member of the society for nearly fifty years. He (Archbishop Mannix) had only been an Irishman about fifty years. Archbishop Redwood had been a member from that day to this, therefore they could be sure that, though he was an Englishman, he had been a practical Catholic for nearly fifty years. (Laughter.) For no one could be a member of the society unless he was a practical Catholic. Archbishop Redwood had more claim to be present than he (the speaker) had, but he did not have more admiration for the society and its high ideals. Hibernians had always been his (Dr. Mannix's) best supporters, and he owed them a debt of gratitude. His admiration was not on personal grounds, but because of their noble ideals and principles. They were first of all good Australians. Any Australian society that did not put Australia first and all the time had no right to exist at all. He had been glad to hear the grand president say that, while they were good Australians, Hibernians were also good Irishmen, who had sympathy for the land from which they had come or from which their parents had come. Ordinary charity should exist between all nations; they should love each other. Therefore, they should love Ireland because Ireland was a nation. They should love her and sympathise with her all the more because she needed sympathy. If every nation and every people should love Ireland, those with Irish blood in their veins should love her all the more. He was attracted to the Hibernian Society, therefore, because one of its aims was to support Ireland. No one in Australia had the right to dictate to Ireland what she should ask or what she should claim. That was Ireland's business. She had the right to choose for herself, just as Poland or Belgium had. Hibernians had supported her when she wanted Home Rule, and now when she was looking for recognition as a nation she could still rely on the support of the Hibernians. There were many flags in the hall that night, but he did not see the Irish flag. Ireland had the right to make her own flag, and she had made it; but it was not in the hall. That was evidently an oversight because the Hibernians were standing behind Ireland in her claim, and part of her claim was the right to have her own flag. He hoped at the next Hibernian gathering he attended that the Irish flag would be there. He was speaking plainly. He made no compromise. There were two reasons why he was attracted to the Hibernian Society, because it supported Ireland, and because its members were loyal Catholics, proud of their religion. His blessing was on them, and he hoped they would always be true to their high ideals and principles.

His Grace Archbishop Redwood said that he was never more at home than when attending an Hibernian gathering. He had been attending meetings of the Hibernians for nearly half a century. The progress of the society in New Zealand had been wonderful, and a great deal of good had been done. Hibernians here were true Catholics and true Australians, and over there they were true Catholics and true New Zealanders. Many members were not of Irish blood. He was one of them. The society was broad enough to take them in, and many of its best members were Englishmen. He would be happy to assist at the jubilee celebrations in Sydney and at the centenary celebrations of St. Mary's Cathedral also. Great work had been done in 50 years by the Hibernian Society, and he felt sure that even more would be done in the future. (Applause.)

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