

## THE NATIONAL UNION OF CATHOLIC TEACHERS OF GREAT BRITAIN

Hold Their Sixth Annual Conference at Liverpool.

The President Delivers a Spirited Address — A Resolution Protesting Against the Recognition in England of the Certificates of Teachers from Ireland Passed.

THE sixth annual conference of the National Union of Catholic Teachers of Great Britain was held recently at Liverpool. Mr. M. O'Neill, Salford, presided at the opening of the proceedings, and he was supported on the platform by Messrs. J. Dorans, treasurer (Wigan), C. A. Farnell, L. Conway, general secretary (Liverpool), Fox, Murry, Cox, O'Loughlin, Pye, Corrigan, Sullivan, M. Conway. Delegates: Miss Pye, Miss N. Brady (Newcastle-on-Tyne), Messrs. J. J. Donnelly (West of Scotland), De Rome and Conway (Bradford), Moon, Sedgewick, McNamara, Kilgarry, and Miss Bolger (Salford). Formal business, and the appointment of officers for the purposes of the conference having been disposed of, the minutes of the Manchester conference were confirmed.

The new president, Mr. R. W. Burton, of Stratford, London, was then installed in the chair, and on the motion of Mr. C. A. Farnell (Wigan), seconded by Mr. Fox (Liverpool), a vote of thanks was given to Mr. O'Neill for his services to the Union during his year of office.

Mr. O'Neill, in reply, said that he had done nothing worthy of mention during his term, with the exception of being instrumental by virtue of his office in restoring to his place a young teacher who had received notice of dismissal.

### PRESIDENT'S INAUGURAL.

The President then proceeded with his inaugural address. He condemned what he called the wretched inadequacy of the financial aid provided for Voluntary Schools by the new Education Bill, and stated the teachers' view of the present financial position. The points to which he would direct their attention as teachers were—(1) What Catholics as a body wanted from the present Government as a full measure of justice; (2) what they have received towards this full measure of justice; (3) what they hoped for from future legislation; and (4) what could be done with the instalment just accorded. Dealing with the first of these points, he stated briefly the Catholic demand. It was that the State, which demanded certain educational benefits, which it knew to be necessary for the general good, and, recognizing the fact that those benefits were to be obtained from two different sources, should see that one source should be left as unimpaired, and should be assisted, so long as it produced what was demanded from it, to precisely the same extent as the other source. (Hear, hear.) If a certain amount of public money was necessary for the easy and effective production of what the public good required in the case of Board Schools, the same amount was necessary for the same easy and effective production in the case of Voluntary schools. Their demand, as simply and unambiguously put forward by the Cardinal and the Bishops, was that every penny of money needed for maintenance purposes in their schools, as the expenses were incurred for the public good, should be chargeable upon the public purse—(Hear, hear.)—whether upon rates or taxes he did not stop to discuss. Every guarantee was offered to satisfy the public that not a single farthing from the public purse should be used for any other purpose than that intended by the public. (Hear, hear.) But that guarantee was

NOT SUFFICIENT TO SATISFY THE NON-CONFORMIST CONSCIENCE,

that conscience which seemed to inspire its owner with the noble principle, "All for me; none for you"—and could suggest no better opposition to their claim than raising the bogey of "denominational endowment." (Hear, hear.) Those who were guided by that conscience wanted more; they wanted a guarantee that the Catholics' right to give religious teaching should be filched from them. That right of freedom in religious training was one which they could neither yield nor compromise upon. (Hear, hear.) For that right he, and those associated with him, had fought and sacrificed, and rather than yield that point they were prepared for the same sacrifices and the same hardships that they had endured in the past. (Hear, hear.) The Catholic body offered to bear the expense of putting up and maintaining buildings, and the expense of administration of their schools—in return for what? The simple right that parents who wished might use the schools in which their children could have—in addition to the same secular instruction as was given in Board schools—instruction in the Faith which they held so dear and prized above all else. (Hear, hear.) That meant, of course, that the right of appointing teachers suitable for carrying out this religious instruction must remain in the hands of the Catholic body. (Hear, hear.) But the teachers, under any conditions, must, as now, first satisfy the Education Department of their qualifications as secular teachers to exactly the same extent as the teachers in Board schools. Now, speaking not as a teacher, but as a Catholic ratepayer, he claimed that he had an equal right with his fellow ratepayer who was a believer

in the Board-school system to share in the benefit of the public rate, of which he was legally bound to pay his share. As a Catholic parent living in a land enjoying the blessings of religious toleration he claimed

THE RIGHT TO HAVE HIS CHILDREN BROUGHT UP IN THE FAITH

which his convictions pointed out to him as the true one, without those children being handicapped in the battle of life because he, as a Catholic, insisted upon that right. (Applause.) Reducing their demand to matters of money, which did require of the Government in order to give Catholics that measure of justice? From the Blue Books he gathered that in Board schools the cost for maintenance per head of each child in average attendance for England and Wales was £2 10s. 1d. To produce the same efficiency as in these schools a like amount should be spent upon each child in average attendance in Catholic schools. Of that amount the Board schools obtained £2 9s. 1d. from public funds, whereas the Catholic schools received from public funds only £1 8s. 1d. per child. That was to say, Catholic schools received from public funds 21s. per child less than was received per child in the Board schools. The average attendance in Catholic schools throughout the country for the last year was 230,392, and multiplying £1 1s. by that number they got £241,519 less. But instead of being given £1 1s. per head they were to be given 5s. per head as the Catholic share of the new grant, namely £57,598. ("Shame.") What did the Catholics still want? Simply the remaining £183,921. (Hear, hear.) Now what, it might be asked, could be done with what they had got or were getting? They had a perfect right to infer that the Government was of the same mind as it was last year, and that the new grant was meant for improving the state and position of the school staff. (Hear, hear.) The Catholic teachers were always willing to take their share of the financial burdens of the maintenance of their schools, but they claimed that their salaries should be brought up to as near the market value of their services as could possibly be done. (Hear, hear.) Assuming that the salaries in Board schools were the nearest approach to the

RECOGNIZED MARKET VALUE OF THE TEACHERS' SERVICES,

there was a strong contrast between these and the salaries of Catholic teachers. The average salary of the Board school headmaster (for England and Wales) was £162 11s.; the average of the Catholic headmaster was £117 3s. 3d., and one-third of the Board school headmasters lived rent free, whereas but one-ninth of the Catholic headmasters did so. The average for Board certificated assistant masters was £103 6s. 4d.; for Catholic certificated assistant masters it was £79 1s. 7d. The Board headmistress received an average of £114 1s. 3d., whereas the Catholic headmistress received £66 14s. 4d. Board certificated assistant mistresses averaged £81 14s. 6d., and Catholic certificated assistant mistresses averaged £52 12s. 5d. In London the salary of the Catholic headmaster averaged less than £110, while the headmaster under the London School Board received an average of £236 15s. 3d. Other grades bore correspondingly unfavourable comparison with the Board school teachers. He pointed out that the cost for maintenance per head of each child in average attendance in Board schools was £2 10s. 1d., and in Catholic schools it was £1 10s. 8d. This showed that the amount spent per head in Catholic schools was 13s. 5d. less than in Board schools. In Board schools £1 18s. 2d. per head was devoted to salaries, and in Catholic schools £1 4s. 8d.—a difference of 13s. 6d. per head. Other charges in Board schools took up 11s. 11d. per head, and in Catholic schools 12s. 0d. per head. He wished to emphasize the figures just quoted; they showed that the amount of money per head used for expenses

OUTSIDE SALARIES WAS PRACTICALLY THE SAME in Catholic schools and in Board schools. The difference between the Board school expenditure per child and the Catholic school expenditure per child, say, 3d. more, was borne by the teacher in the shape of a loss of salary to the extent of that difference. Those figures made clear the claim of the Catholic teachers upon the State for work done for the State's good, and until that difference was entirely wiped out the Catholic teacher would be more or less a dissatisfied individual. (Applause.)

The president having been thanked for his address,

Mr. Donovan (London) moved, and Mr. A. O'Neill (London) seconded, the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:—"That no Government scheme for the relief of Voluntary schools can be considered satisfactory by Catholic teachers which does not secure adequate salaries to teachers in Voluntary schools, enable the management to fully staff and equip the schools, and place the finances of Voluntary schools in precisely the same position, as far as maintenance charges are concerned, as those of Board schools."

Mr. M. O'Neill (Salford) proposed:—"That this conference respectfully tenders its best thanks to the Hierarchy for its effective advocacy of the claims of Catholic schools, resulting in the aid grant, which we acknowledge as an instalment of justice, and that we look forward hopefully to the Low Week meeting of the Cardinal and the Bishops to establish such principles for its distribution as will lead to its being applied to the levelling up of the salaries of the Catholic teachers, as the chief means of securing the efficiency of our schools, as contemplated by the new Education Act."

Mr. T. Corrigan (Manchester) seconded. He said that he had been attending conferences of teachers all his lifetime, and at every one of them the question of salary had come up. Was it not time that that harassing question was removed from their path, and that the Catholic teachers should be relieved from the embarrassing penury to which they had so long been subjected.

Mr. Fox (Liverpool) supported the resolution. He looked upon the state

men of both political parties in this country as unpatriotic, factious, narrow-minded, and mean; otherwise they would see that every child in this country had a chance of getting the best possible education that that child was capable of. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. De Rome (Bradford) also supported, and the resolution was passed unanimously.

After some discussion the following resolution was passed:—"That, in view of the immediate

FORMATION OF FEDERATIONS OF SCHOOLS, some scheme of graded salaries be formulated, having as a basis the status and length of service of the teachers, and the size and situation of the schools. That these salaries should be approximate generally to those obtainable for similar services and qualifications in the principal Board schools of the country; that in all schools with an average attendance of 200 and upwards, sufficient staff should be provided to allow the head teacher to be free for the purpose of general supervision." Mr. T. Corrigan moved, and Mr. Kilgarry (Salford) seconded, "That every year the Education Department should cause to be published in the Blue Book a detailed account of the expenditure under the Education Act, 1897." Mr. Donovan (London) moved, and Mr. Murray (Liverpool), seconded, "That this conference expresses its deepest regret at the increasing number of mistresses in charge of boys' schools, and again records its conviction that such appointments are detrimental to the best interests of the children, and in addition constitute a grave injustice to certificated masters."

Mr. M. O'Neill supported, and the resolution was adopted.

On the motion of Mr. Keeley (Liverpool), seconded by Miss Sullivan (Manchester), it was resolved "That infants' mistresses be paid at the same rate as mistresses in girls' schools."

The conference resumed its deliberations on Tuesday, April 20th. The president, Mr. R. W. Burton, of London, occupied the chair.

THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS WERE ELECTED for the ensuing year:—Vice-president, Mr. T. Corrigan (Manchester); treasurer, Mr. J. Dorans (Wigan); general secretary, Mr. J. Kilgarry (Salford); executive committee, Miss Pye (Liverpool), Miss Sullivan (Manchester), Miss Brady (Newcastle-on-Tyne), Messrs. J. Cox (Liverpool), M. Conway and R. De Rome (Bradford), J. P. Donovan (London), B. Fox (Liverpool), J. Murray (Liverpool), A. O'Neill (London), M. Power (Wigan), and J. Sedgewick (Manchester).

Mr. De Rome proposed:—"This conference is of opinion that the Catholic associations (or federations) formed under the Voluntary Schools Act shall consist of at least one third representative laymen, including teachers." He said that it would give the public great confidence in the distribution of the funds if there were an admixture of laymen on the bodies that were to be entrusted with the administration of the grants. He knew that in the minds of some of those outside the ranks of the Catholic, there was some degree of distrust in a body composed exclusively of clerics having the distribution of money. Another reason why he thought laymen ought to be brought into closer contact with the schools than they had hitherto been. He thought it would have a good effect generally, and he hoped that teachers would be included in the proportion asked for.

Mr. Conway (Bradford) seconded, and the resolution, having been supported by Mr. Murray and Mr. Corrigan, was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Cox proposed:—"That the interests of education, and consideration for services faithfully rendered to the public, demand that adequate provision should be made by the State for the retirement of teachers incapacitated by age or infirmity." He said that many teachers had reached the age at which they ought to be relieved from their labours, but who, unfortunately, could not retire owing to their poverty. The Catholic teachers were never able to save anything, since their incomes were scarcely enough for their wants, and therefore the necessity was all the greater for providing them with a superannuation allowance. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. L. Conway seconded the resolution, and it was passed unanimously.

Mr. Dorans moved:—"That this conference protests against the recognition of

THE IRISH CERTIFICATE IN ENGLISH SCHOOLS,

and considers that only those teachers should be recognized who have obtained the certificate of the Education Department." He explained that the motion did not object to Irish teachers by any means, because about 90 per cent. of the Catholic teachers of this country were Irish; but they objected to having any more backdoors opened to entrance to

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their profession. (Hear, hear.) He understood that there was a clause in the Education Bill under which Irish certificated teachers would come to this country and enter upon the work of teaching. That clause was described as a sop to the Catholic Hierarchy, but he could not see it in that light. He did not think there was any immediate fear of the teachers coming over, because they were better off in Ireland than the English teachers were here, and, in addition, they had a pension when they retired, which English teachers had not.

Mr. Donovan seconded the resolution, saying he objected to this further Irish invasion on the ground that it opened another door to the easy entrance to the profession.

Mr. Cox said this feared incursion of Irish teachers was not likely to happen, for the simple reason that the

TEACHERS WERE BETTER OFF IN IRELAND than they would be in England. An Irish teacher would be of but little use in an English school, as an English teacher would perhaps be in an Irish school.

Mr. O'Neill thought it would be ungracious on their part to pass the resolution, for which he conceived there was no necessity.

Mr. Fox and Mr. McNamara opposed the resolution, which, being put to the meeting, was declared carried.

Mr. Donovan proposed, Mr. Keeley seconded, and Messrs. De Rome, Corrigan, and other delegates supported, the following resolution, which was passed with only one dissentient:—"That this conference respectfully submits that the time has arrived when the inspection of the Catholic schools may be substituted for the present system of religious examination, as such a change will conduce to a sounder and more rational religious training of the children."

Votes of thanks to the chairman and others brought the public portion of the proceedings to a close.

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## Cote des Neiges Cemetery.

La Fabrique de Notre Dame takes this opportunity of informing parties interested that the removal of bodies from the vaults will take place as soon as the ground is ready, and all such should be removed not later than May 20th. In future La Fabrique de Notre Dame will not take care of any family lots, without an order from the proprietors defining work to be done. Office of La Fabrique de Notre Dame, 1708 Notre Dame street.

## OTTAWA IRISHMEN.

St. Patrick's Literary and Scientific Society — A Proposal to Erect a Hall for the Organization.

The regular monthly meeting of the St. Patrick's Literary and Scientific Society of Ottawa was held last week in the premises of the organization on Sussex street. The annual reports of the work carried on during the past year were presented, showing that the society was in a flourishing condition. Mr. John Heney, during the progress of the meeting, made a spirited speech in favor of erecting a hall for the purpose of more effectively carrying on the work of the society. We take the following report of the meeting from the Free Press:—

The committee's annual report was read and adopted. It stated that the committee had been opposed to the change from the old quarters at the corner of Rideau and Sussex streets to their present rooms. The move had been a retrogressive one, but they would have to remain until their lease expired. The question of securing new quarters was also advocated. The excursion to Montreal under the auspices of the society had been a very successful one. The concert on St. Patrick's Day had been the most attractive and successful ever held by them. The committee called on the members to show more energy both individually and collectively to advance the interests of the society and also to foster a unity of spirit.

The Librarian's report was a very extensive document and showed the flourishing condition of the library and reading room.

The treasurer's report was not presented owing to the illness of the treasurer, Mr. J. J. Finch. It will be brought down at the next meeting in June. It is confidently expected by the members that his report will show the society to be in a far better condition financially than it has been for some years past.

It was moved by Mr. V. McCullough, seconded by Mr. Burns, that President P. A. Eagleton, John Heney and F. B. Hayes be appointed a committee to call a public general meeting of the city Irishmen for the purpose of helping the Home Rule movement in Ireland. Besides the Home Rule question, others of great importance to Irishmen generally will be before the meeting for discussion.

A PROPOSAL TO ERECT A BUILDING.

Mr. John Heney, in an enthusiastic speech, advocated the erection of a hall that would be a credit to the society, in a central portion of the city. He showed the society's need of permanent quarters and stated that without doubt they would receive the hearty co-operation of the other Catholic organizations of the city. In a very little town in Ireland there was a national hall for Irishmen, and Mr. Heney would like to see the Capital on equal footing with this place.

The idea is to erect a large building similar to the O.A.A.C., with gymnasium and all the other requisites of an athletic club. Besides this there would be a number of meeting rooms, where the different societies could hold their gatherings.

The society has been offered the loan of some \$15,000 at a low rate of interest to carry the project through. Over \$2,000 will be forthcoming from the members themselves.

The society has now a membership of 200 and it is expected that by the time of the next meeting this number will be increased to 300.

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## IRELAND AND SCOTLAND.

A GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL TO CONSTRUCT A SUBMARINE TUNNEL BETWEEN THESE COUNTRIES.

There is a rumor current in New York that the British government has under consideration a plan for the great submarine tunnel which the mind of man ever conceived. It provides for

a passageway, to be lighted by electricity, beneath the Irish sea, or the North Channel, as it is called, from a point in Scotland just north of Point Patrick to a point in Ireland just west of Carrickfergus and several miles north of the arm of the sea stretching up to Belfast, which is known as Belfast Lake. The total estimated cost is \$35,000,000, and the plan which the government is considering is that submitted by a syndicate, which agrees to bind itself to bring the project to a successful accomplishment.

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