Cumann na Sclear Luíc nGaedealac

GAELIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

CENTRAL COUNCIL.

SECRETARY'S REPORT.

The year just passed has been the most successful one in many respects yet held under the auspices of the Central Council.

In accordance with an order of last Congress that an attractive fixture should be undertaken, the proceeds, after paying expenses, to be given the Ulster Provincial Council, was brought off, the contesting teams being Dublin and Cork, in Hurling, the gate receipts compared with our Championship finals were disappointing, still we were in a position to hand over to the Secretary of the Ulster Provincial Council the sum of £74 odd.

The Central Council also decided during the year, on an application from the Kerry gaels, to run a match between Kildare (the All-Ireland Champions), and Kerry for the benefit of the Kerry goal-keeper, Mr. Dillon. As a result of the contest the Council were enabled to hand over the sum of £110, after paying expenses.

The turn-over accruing from the All-Ireland Championship matches totalled the record figures of £4,838, showing a profit of £2,484, after discharging all expenditure in connection with the running of the Championship, together with discharging liabilities due by the Council from previous Balance Sheets, amongst which were one for the Wolfe Tone Committee amounting to over £300.

The earnings of Croke Park realised the sum of £1,576, as compared with £825 for 1918. The increased earnings were largely due to the co-operation of the various local committees in making fixtures, which resulted in the running of three separate programmes each Sunday during the summer months.

The Central Council during the year appointed a Sub-Committee to act as a permanent Croke Park Grounds Committee for the purpose of dealing with constructional work in general, and consult with the Secretary as to the various alterations and improvements necessary. Already a great deal of improvements have been effected, which includes the erection of a new pailing completely closing in the playing pitch on all ends of the ground, and thus providing extra accommodation. The playing pitch has been increased by 15 yards in length, whilst still retaining a width of 91 yards. The Grounds Committee recognised, owing to the amount of games carried out during the year, the necessity of closing the grounds for three months, so as to allow for portions of the playing pitch to be resodded and the ground as a whole to undergo a proper course of levelling. This work is now almost complete, and the Committee expect to be in a position to re-open the grounds on the first or second Sunday after Easter. Already the sum of over £1,600 has been spent on the grounds, as will be seen by the Croke Park Balance Sheet. The Committee after consultation with the Central Council have decided on the erection of a Stand at the Enclosure end together with the concreting of the present existing bank for a distance of 75 yards. Drawings and plans have been prepared by the Architects appointed by the Council, and submitted and approved of by the Committee; quantities for the work have been made out, and advertisements inserted inviting contractors to send in tenders for the work. The Architects estimate that the contract will cost over £5,000. The Committee are anxious to have the work completed in time for the 1920 All-Ireland Finals, and with this object in view intends placing the order with one of the leading firms of contractors. The Central Council recognising the big responsibility they were undertaking decided on the running of an All-Ireland Competition to provide portion of the funds, so as to enable the work to be carried out. All the Counties invited to compete consented, and the first round of the competition has already been decided. Judging by the support already received in the first-round matches, the Council look forward to considerably augmenting their funds for the carrying out of the project.

DR. CROKE MEMORIAL.

The Central Council, as a result of correspondence with the Sculptor and Contractor, Mr. Doyle Jones, had to consider a revision of the price to be paid for the erection of the Dr. Croke Memorial, due in a large measure to the increased cost of labour and materials. Eventually it was decided to allow the contractor the sum of £1,600, instead of the £1,000 originally fixed, and the Council's Solicitors were instructed to prepare fresh agreements in connection therewith, binding the contract and at the same time procuring whatever safeguards were necessary for the protection of the Council and any fees paid on foot of the Memorial. A Bond was entered into by "Lloyds" on behalf of Mr. Doyle Jones guaranteeing the erection of the Memorial and indemnifying the Council against loss, whilst a Policy was also effected on his life for £1,100 as a further security in case of death. Already one-third of the contract price, £533 6s. 8d., in accordance with the conditions of the Agreement, have been paid Mr. Doyle Jones, and a further instalment stands to be paid on the completion of the plaster model. Mr. Doyle Jones visited Thurles in December last and placed the contract for the stonework with Mr. McDonnell, Templemore, and arranged at a Joint Meeting of the Central Council and representatives of the Tipperary Co. Board for the Foundation Stone-Laying on St. Patrick's Day and the Unveiling on 15th August. The Central Council decided on inviting His Grace the Most Reverend Dr. Harty, Archbishop of Cashel and Emly, to perform the ceremony of Laying the Foundation Stone. At a later meeting it was decided to have a Hurling contest on the occasion, and the 1919 All-Ireland Hurling Champions (Cork) were invited to play Tipperary. The proceedings in connection with the ceremony on St. Patrick's Day were all that could be desired, everything being carried through without a hitch, due in a large measure to the earnest work of the local Organising Committee.

In accordance with the order of Congress that steps be taken to put down betting at matches carried out under the auspices of the Association, representatives of the Central and Leinster Councils, as the result of an interview with other National bodies, entered into an arrangement whereby the proper supervision of the grounds would be carried out. The arrangements have worked very satisfactory at headquarters, no betting whatever taking place within the grounds.

Signed on behalf of Central Council,

L. J. O'TOOLE,

Secretary.

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