

Cardinal Moran and the Italian Relief Fund

A cable message received here on February 1 stated that the Lord Mayor of Sydney invited his Eminence Cardinal Moran to send the sums collected in the Catholic churches to his (the Lord Mayor's) Italian fund. His Eminence wrote declining the request. His reasons for doing so are fully stated in the following correspondence:

My Dear Lord Mayor,—In reply to your very courteous letter of the 27th inst., relative to the fund for the relief of the Italian sufferers, permit me to remark that I do not anticipate that a very large sum will be withdrawn from the hands of your citizens' committee by the arrangements which I suggested in my circular of the 18th inst. It was not my intention to initiate a general parochial collection, and I have merely requested the clergy to receive the smaller alms of the faithful who might desire to have an opportunity of offering their mite towards the relief of the poor sufferers. The contributors of large sums will, I presume, have already sent their cheques to one or other of the relief committees. I may also remark that in the present case there cannot be any question of discriminating between Catholics and Protestants, as I believe that the Messinese and other sufferers are all Catholics. But as the result of long experience in the dispensing of charities, I am convinced that charitable aid through private sources is very often enabled to alleviate cases of the greatest suffering and distress that would otherwise be overlooked by public officials. In the public and official dispensing of charities there is at times a great deal of routine and red-tape which is altogether inconsistent with genuine charity. Very often, too, a great deal of the offerings that would be devoted to charitable aid is spent in the salaries of secretaries and other agents to the detriment of the intended charity. It not infrequently also happens that some sharp individuals insinuate themselves into the administration of those funds, who do not enjoy the confidence of the Catholic body. Such cases have not been unknown in Australia; whilst in the present condition of Italy it is a contingency that it may be prudent to guard against. I see it also officially announced that, out of the collected funds, the public buildings at Messina and its beautiful suburbs are to be restored. I do not consider that those who subscribe small sums would approve of their charitable offerings being thus applied.

Allow me to add that in the present instance, where there is question of bringing relief to cities and villages that are wholly Catholic, and when the public press reckons among the sufferers several priests and members of religious communities, with at least one Cardinal and Archbishop, it seems passing strange how in our city of Sydney a citizens' committee could be formed which excludes from the list the name of every Catholic priest, whilst the Anglican Church and the Methodist community are officially represented on it.

Whilst I venture to make these remarks in the same spirit of disinterestedness and freedom with which you, my Lord Mayor, have been pleased to write to me, I beg to assure you of my highest personal respect and esteem, and I have the honor to remain, your very obedient servant,

(Signed) ✠ PATRICK F. CARD. MORAN,
Archbishop of Sydney.

At a meeting of the Relief Committee on February 1 the Lord Mayor said he was pained to get the letter from his Eminence the Cardinal. When he (the Lord Mayor) undertook the responsibility of calling a meeting together he felt that they had one object, and one only. It was not a question of nation or creed. It was a question of giving sympathy and help to these sufferers in Italy. The response had been magnificent. 'When my committee was nominated in this room,' said the Lord Mayor, 'the names were given without discrimination, and we did realise that the one responsibility we undertook was to come to the aid of the nation.' His Eminence had seen fit to answer the letter which he (the Lord Mayor) had sent to him, carrying out the instructions of the committee, the results of whose work had been monumental and without any prejudice against any creed. He was more than pained to get the letter, because he did not think that their work, which had been purely unsectarian, had demanded a reply of that character.

An Alleged Interview.

The *Australian Star*, in its endeavors to establish a reputation for smartness (remarks the *Freeman's Journal*), advertises that it has 'a powerful staff of reporters.' To any journal of reliability, such a procedure is unnecessary. It is calculated to remind one of a timid man walking through a graveyard and whistling to keep his spirits up. It would seem to have been left to Cardinal Moran to reveal the strength of that 'powerful' staff. If the *Star's* report on Tuesday last of an alleged interview con-

cerning the Cardinal's attitude towards the Citizens' Relief Fund for the distressed Italians be a sample it may be granted that its reportorial staff is 'powerful' in one respect at least. We here give the material portion of the report: 'Seen this afternoon by a reporter from the *Star*, Cardinal Moran was very reticent. Asked if he had any special reasons for dissociating himself from the Lord Mayor's Fund, he replied:

'I might have many reasons; but I'm not going to tell you.'

'Have you any reasons, then, for withholding the information?' persisted the reporter.

'I have nothing to say at all,' was the reply. 'Perhaps,' he added, 'you are after more caricatures like the last in the *Star*.'

'Did you write the Lord Mayor a letter explaining your reasons for withdrawing from the fund?'

'Go and see the Lord Mayor,' replied the Cardinal. 'He might tell you; I won't.'

'Will you say, then, whether you wrote to the Lord Mayor disassociating yourself from the Italian earthquake fund?'

The Cardinal moved to the door, and indicated he was becoming impatient at the questions. 'Go and see the Lord Mayor,' he answered. 'If I did write to the Lord Mayor he will perhaps tell you what was said. I am not going to say anything. If we did disassociate from the fund the Lord Mayor might tell you. We might have reasons for doing so, but I'm not going to tell you.'

His Eminence the Cardinal characterised the interview as a mere clumsy invention, and published the following denial in the morning papers:

Sir,—An evening contemporary (the *Star*) in yesterday's issue presents to its readers a supposed interview with me, under the startling heading, 'Extraordinary Situation: Cardinal Moran Withdraws,' etc. Permit me to state that in so far as I am concerned there was no such interview, and that neither directly or indirectly did I give expression to any such discourteous sentiments as those imputed to me. The whole narrative from first to last is a mere clumsy invention.—Yours, etc.,

✠ PATRICK FRANCIS CARD. MORAN,

February 2. Archbishop of Sydney.

Diocesan News

ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

February 13.

The Wellington Catholic Seamen's Conference intend entertaining the sailors in port on Thursday evening, 25th inst., at St. Patrick's Hall, Boulcott street.

The St. Patrick's College midsummer holidays end on Thursday, 18th inst., on which day the punctual return of all resident pupils is earnestly requested.

The Very Rev. Father O'Shea, S.M., V.G., will conduct the retreat for the students at Meanee, which commences on Monday, 15th inst.

There was Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in St. Mary of the Angels' on Sunday from last Mass until Vespers. In the evening the Rev. Father Venning, S.M., preached an instructive discourse.

The members of the cricket team of the Wellington Catholic Club played Easson's at Kilbirnie on Saturday afternoon, and proved the victors. The scores were: Catholic Club, 29 and six wickets for 38; Easson's, 23 and 44.

The ladies' committees of the Wellington South parish are working hard to make their stalls at their Easter bazaar attractive, while the general committee are arranging programmes, etc., for each evening's amusement.

The residents of the district of Wadestown are so enthusiastic over the matter of the purchase of a section for the erection of a church in that township that they have already subscribed sufficient funds to pay off two instalments (£100) of the purchase money.

The Rev. Father Hickson, S.M., Adm., Thorndon, denies the statement made in a local journal that it is intended to hand over the proposed new boys' school to the Patrician Brothers. It will be staffed by the Marist Brothers, who are already in charge of the Boulcott street school.

On Friday evening the usual monthly meeting of the men's branch of the Sacred Heart Association (Thorndon parish) was held at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, and, notwithstanding the inclement weather, there was a fair attendance. Rev. Father Hickson, S.M., delivered an interesting discourse on the life of St. Brigid.

LANGFORD and RHIND

... (Late W. and H. Langford), ... Funeral Furnishers, 80X 523
19 LONDON ST. Phone 389 and Embalmers

Addresses—HERBERT LANGFORD, 16 London St., Richmond. Phone, 699. Town Office—227 CASHEL ST.
JOHN RHIND, 48 Montreal St., Sydenham. Phone, 1603. Phone, 910.

Christchurch