

any intention of going. In order to get his name definitely removed from the Y.M.C.A. roll he is sending in his 'resignation' of a membership which had never any existence except on paper. The third boy went once to a Y.M.C.A. meeting more than a year ago, and the secretary promptly put his name on the roll. The boy has never been to a meeting since, and had never any intention of returning, but he still flourishes as a 'member' in the Y.M.C.A. publication. He, too, is sending in his 'resignation.' The fourth boy has actually been for some months a regular patron of the Y.M.C.A., and he is also a practical Catholic. In joining the organisation he had, of course, no knowledge of its confessional character, or of the fact that Catholics are directly discriminated against and debarred from holding any executive office in the Association. He also will withdraw from membership. Like the ten little nigger boys of the nursery rhyme who so rapidly and successfully did the vanishing trick, the eight 'Roman Catholic' members who made such a brave showing in the Y.M.C.A. publication have thus been speedily reduced in number, until, when full investigation has been made, it is found that only one is left who was both a practical Catholic and a real member of the association; and even he has now resigned. In circulating this statement regarding the Levin membership of his institution the national secretary of the Y.M.C.A. is officially disseminating what is not true. No one wishes any harm to this young men's organisation; but it cannot be allowed to push its claims by sailing under false colors. Such a policy may seem to succeed for a time; but the deception is soon found out, and the institution which is associated with it is brought into serious discredit.

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Meanwhile, as a further gentle warning to unsuspecting Catholics, young and old, as to the sort of entanglement in which they may land themselves by 'putting down their names' for subscriptions, etc., without taking care to acquaint themselves with the precise nature of the organisation, we reproduce the following account of an instructive incident from a recent issue of the *San Francisco Monitor*: 'Flagstaff, Arizona, is just now the scene of an interesting controversy between prominent Catholics and the Young Men's Christian Association. The Catholics are well-known business men of Flagstaff, who some time ago put their names to a public subscription for the Y.M.C.A. When they learned that, according to the by-laws and constitution of the Y.M.C.A., Catholics are debarred from holding office in the association they refused to pay the promised subscriptions. Thereupon the Y.M.C.A. sued. The case went to trial last week, and the jury brought a verdict against the Catholics, declaring that the subscriptions must be paid. The defendants are P. T. Hurley (500 dollars), A. T. Hesey (1325 dollars), and S. D. Lount and Son (500 dollars). Mr. Hurley is one of the best-known business men in Arizona. The Catholics have appealed the case to the Supreme Court. The payment or non-payment of about 6000 dollars in held-up subscriptions depends on the final outcome of the case.' The incident carries its own moral. If these estimable Catholic citizens had carefully read their Catholic paper they would probably have been saved from this blunder.

The Federation and Politics

How very necessary it is that members and advocates of the Catholic Federation, in publicly expounding the relation of the organisation to politics, should exercise reasonable discretion and keep strictly within the four corners of the actual provisions of the constitution on the subject is illustrated by the sequel to a recent utterance by Father O'Reilly, of Bathurst, a mutilated portion of which was cabled to New Zealand. According to the cable, 'the Rev. M. J. O'Reilly, president of St. Stanislaus College, declared that the Roman Catholics were going to organise so as to deal with their opponents in the most effective way—namely, at the ballot-box. "The Catholic Federation of New South Wales is a political body, and," he said, "we are going to sell ourselves to the highest bidder. We shall

be in the market by-and-by. For a great many years I have been voting Labor, but I shall vote another ticket to-morrow if it suits me.' As a matter of fact that is by no means a fair representation of what Father O'Reilly really said. He explained that the Federation was not a political organisation in the ordinary and recognised sense of the expression; but one indiscreet sentence gave the daily press the opportunity to pounce upon the movement, and they were not slow to take advantage of it. On the morning after Father O'Reilly's utterance both of the big Sydney dailies came out with solemn and stodgy and at the same time ill-natured deliverances on the new movement. The *Herald*, for example, remarked: 'It is the fact that a large number of the men and women of this State having in common, besides their citizenship, only their religious adherence to the Church of Rome, have permitted themselves to be guided (if not coerced) in their exercise of the franchise by the leaders of their religious community. Their intrusion into politics is, therefore, a factor which cannot be neglected. It is well known that at the last State elections these votes were cast on the side of Labor. A price was paid in the passing of the Bursaries Act, and in other ways.' The same absurd insinuation—that the Federation is a clerical movement organised for the purpose of further coercing a priest-ridden people—was voiced by the *Daily Telegraph* in still more undisguised fashion. 'Were it [the programme of the Catholic Federation as Father O'Reilly expounds it] to materialise,' it remarks, 'and the twenty-five per cent. or so of the people who are included amongst the adherents of the Roman Catholic Church, or a similar number belonging to any Church or class, to take such an attitude, representative government would assume a new phase. The ordinary questions which Governments exist to deal with would drop into abeyance, and Parliament be transformed from a work-a-day institution into a futile babel of dogmatic tongues, in the midst of which the secular affairs of the country would be left to take care of themselves. . . . It is to us incredible, however, that any large body of intelligent Roman Catholics would be prepared to follow the lead of Father O'Reilly in this matter. . . . Roman Catholics have the same interest in sound civil government as other citizens, and the days of dragooning people to the ballot-box have gone.'

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The attitude of the Federation towards politics is laid down with perfect clearness in the Constitution as it has been adopted in New Zealand and in all of the Australian States in which the organisation has been established. The preamble and explanation of objects declare: 'It is not a political party organisation, and does not seek to influence the political views of its members, nor to touch politics except where politics touch religion. It stands for the Christian life of the nation; for the Christian education of youth; for the repression of intemperance; for the sanctity and indissolubility of Christian marriage; for the safe-guarding of the Christian home, and of Catholic institutions, and for the suppression of indecent, objectionable, and anti-Catholic literature, pictures, films, theatricals, and advertisements. It asserts the necessity of Christian principles in social and public life, in the State, in business, and in all financial and industrial relations. It is willing to co-operate with all citizens and all civil and social agencies working for truth and virtue. The aims of the Federation, therefore, are religious and patriotic: they are the interests of all New Zealand Catholic citizens and of those who believe in the revelation of a Divine religion through Christ our Saviour.' There is no ambiguity about that; and it is the official statement on the position. So long as that Constitution is in operation no member or advocate of the Federation has either the right or the need to go beyond it.

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