

of battle in a uniform of brown khaki that is almost undistinguishable in colour from the sun-toasted veldt over which they march and fight. Armies have at length learned the lesson of 'protective colouring' which the great Creator taught long ago to the quail and the skylark and the hare and the polar bear and thousands of others of His irrational creatures. 'Twas ever thus in life. The dull mediocrity of intellect or of virtue or of energy that never shines amidst its surroundings offers a poor mark for the steel-tipped bullets of envy, hate, or calumny. It therefore generally plods its weary way across the rolling veldt of life with little molestation, and comes at last to its final halting-place without having attracted much of either hostile or of friendly notice. In this dull, khaki-coloured world shining intellect is the best mark for hostile criticism and shining virtue for calumny—just as the scarlet tunic and the glancing steel were the best targets for the levelled Mausers of Oom Paul's burghers. In ancient Greece there were street-corner politicians and mugwump 'lecturers' who could not tolerate hearing the noble-minded Aristides surnamed 'the Just.' They hounded him down and kept hounding him down till he was sentenced to 10 years' banishment—solely because of his too conspicuous domestic and civic virtues. Joan of Arc had her detractors. So have had most of the great saints and servants of God from the days of the prophets—who were stoned to death, sawn in twain, etc.—even down to Father Damien, whose spotless character was aspersed by one Dr. Hyde, who was small-minded enough to envy and hate the simple Belgian priest whose heroism he did not dare to imitate. And this, too, explains why roving impostors, from Maria Monk down to Joseph Slattery's female companion, have selected the noble and devoted band of Catholic Sisterhoods—who have given up all that the world holds dear to serve their neighbour for Christ's dear sake—as the target for calumnies the commercial value of which is in direct ratio to their foulness and obscenity. So true are Shakespeare's oft-quoted words:—

Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny.

And again:—

No might nor greatness in mortality  
Can censure 'scape; back-wounding calumny  
The whitest virtue strikes. What king so strong  
Can tie the gall up in the slanderous tongue?

TWO  
GOOD  
EXAMPLES.

BUT the conspicuous boycott of Slattery and his sham nun by decent Protestants and by clergymen of every non-Catholic denomination furnishes us with fresh evidence—if such were needed—that this sort of crusade is

being fast confined to the tag rag-and-bobtail of the populations of big cities. In due course it will be beaten back to the quarters from which it originally emerged—the house of ill-fame. There is no more pleasing sign of the times than the growing readiness, and even enthusiasm, with which enlightened non-Catholics recognise the wealth of virtue and self-sacrifice—even to the farthest verge of utter heroism—which exists among the religious Orders of women in the Catholic Church. The reckless bravery of Catholic nuns in the Spanish-American war, and more recently still in shell-riven Kimberley and Mafeking, are not merely isolated instances of their devotion to duty. They are merely fresh links of gold added to the long chain that extends away through the ages back to and far beyond the days of Fabiola, and lead us up at last to the feet of Christ the Consoler. A recent and conspicuous example of high appreciation by Protestants of the work of Catholic nuns comes to us from Aberdeen, in the land of John Knox. An annual grant had been made to the Sisters of Nazareth for the schools which they conducted in the Granite City. One fine day news got about that the local County Council proposed to discontinue the grant. Thereupon a number of leading Protestant citizens generously came forward of their own accord and unsolicited, and promptly laid down before the Superior a sum equal to the full amount of the withdrawn grant. 'The County Council,' says the *Ave Maria*, 'experienced a change of heart: the grant was allowed, and the Sisters returned the money to their Protestant friends with a gracious note of thanks. Honour to the Protestants of Aberdeen!'

The Aberdeen incident recalls to our minds a similar attempt that was made by the Washington Orangemen (or A.P.A.) to exclude the Providence Hospital from any share in the district charitable appropriations. The attempt failed, owing to the manly speech of Speaker Henderson in favour of the nuns—and such failures add to the happiness of human existence. The *S. H. Review*, of December 16, gives the following extract from Mr. Henderson's speech. At the present juncture it is well worth republication in New Zealand:—

Gentlemen may think that I feel deeply on this question. I do. It is well known that I am no Catholic. Perhaps I am in big luck if I can be regarded as a thoroughbred Protestant. I do not wear any religious shackles. The religion of God is unfettered, I

realise the claims of humanity, wherever I find it, in health or in suffering. But I can remember the time in 1861, when, in the Good Samaritan Hospital of St. Louis, these 'Little Sisters,' with their white bonnets and their pure, innocent faces, received into that institution my comrades who had measles and smallpox, and nursed them as only wives and Sisters nurse. And from that hour in 1861 I swore that I would defend them in their works of mercy. And I have done so on the floor of this house, with the A.P.A. organised in my city. And I do it to-night, defying those who would throttle an orphan child and bow the supple hinges of the knee to worse than 'sectarianism'—to more bitter tyranny than 'sectarianism.' No cross or crescent is more dangerous to this republic than these men who meet in the street and try to intimidate Congress from the discharge of a sacred duty to the fatherless and motherless. I have discussed this question before. I feel all that a man can feel in my earnestness about this matter. I feel the impulses of a man who should do his duty even if a Damascus blade in the hand of some secret organisation is held over him.

A wholesome and manly speech! And the moral of it all is this. It is manifestly easier and cheaper to vilify Catholic nuns than to imitate them.

THE POP-  
AND  
THE TWENTIETH  
CENTURY.

It has been a ruinously rainy summer down South. And the knight of scissors-and-paste who conducts the religious column in the *Dunedin Evening Star* probably goes to his cucumber patch to extract therefrom stray sunbeams with which to cheer the drizzling and melancholy hours. At least we should not be surprised if he did so. For does he not habitually go to equally unlikely sources for practically all the light he throws on Catholic happenings? He apparently never dreams of referring to Catholic sources for Catholic news, and avoids the 'Romanist' Press as if every square inch of it were peppered over with germs of the bubonic plague. His latest exploit is to make Pope Leo XIII. declare the present year of grace, 1900, the beginning of the twentieth century. This was in the *Evening Star* of last Saturday. In our issue of February 8 there appeared an editorial note which, for those who read it, ought to have clinched the matter and placed it beyond the reach of further discussion. But the religious editor of the *Star* neither 'found' nor 'made a note of' this item of Catholic news. As a matter of fact, the Pope has issued no special decree whatever regarding the question, but incidentally accepts the first instant of the year 1901 as the beginning of twentieth century. Thus, 'in the course of the Universal Decree regarding the Jubilee (dated November 13, 1899) the Congregation of Rites expressly states that 'at midnight of the last day of December of the coming year [1900] the present century will come to an end and a new one begin.' The Church of all the ages, which reformed the Calendar, ought to be a good judge of such matters as the opening and close of the centuries. The words of the Universal Decree will, therefore, carry due weight. In the course of a recent interview on the subject, Father Cormack, of Cardiff, quoted a circular letter issued by Bishop Hedley on December 16. The Bishop says: 'At midnight on December 31, 1900, the nineteenth century ends, with all its good and evil, and the new century begins, with all its hopes and fears.' Continuing, Father Cormack said: 'The National Committee of England for the regulation of the different events by which the Holy Year or Year of Jubilee 1900 is to be celebrated, also treats the year 1900 as the last of the nineteenth century.' This committee is presided over by Cardinal Vaughan; and his Holiness the Pope, in his encyclical letters and communications to the clergy and faithful, accepts, as a matter of course, that the nineteenth century ends with December 31, 1900, and that the twentieth century begins with January 1, 1901.'

THAT  
RESOLUTION  
OF  
CONDOLENCE.

HATRED is, perhaps, of all passions, the one that lives longest and dies the most lingering death. Hence all of us that are acquainted with the bottomless depth and intense bitterness of the Orange Society's hatred of the Catholic clergy—unless when they are cashiered for bad conduct—received a mild shock of pleased surprise on reading our Auckland correspondent's statement that the local Grand Lodge had expressed its regret at the demise of the late Monsignor Macdonald. The same Grand Lodge had eight or nine months previously invited to our shores the dismissed inebriate, Joseph Slattery, and the female impostor that accompanies him. Singularly enough, on the very same day (January 5) that the New Zealand Grand Lodge passed this resolution of sympathy, it concluded arrangements with this unhappy pair of vagrant disturbers and sent instructions to all the lodges in the Colony to receive them with open arms and accord them their utmost support in a campaign of abominable calumnies which represents the priesthood of the Catholic Church as monsters of vice—as diabolical Franksteins who, every moment that they cumber and blight the earth with their presence, are robbing the hangman and the devil of their due. At least two of those who assisted in passing the vote of condolence on the death of Monsignor Macdonald stood by the side of Slattery on the platform of the Foresters' Hall ten days later, on January 15.

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