

**CORRESPONDENCE**

[We do not hold ourselves responsible for opinions expressed by our correspondents.]

**THE CATHOLIC FEDERATION.**

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—It is reported in one of the local papers that the general secretary of the Catholic Federation (Mr. Girling-Butcher) is credited with saying at a meeting of the Catholic Immigration Society that notwithstanding the 'pessimistic' attitude or utterances of certain Catholics the success of the latter society was assured. It is a matter for congratulation to all Catholics it is so, but might I suggest that a good deal of this 'pessimism' of which this gentleman complains is very much attributable to the very careless and indifferent manner in which this special concern under his control is carried on? For instance, although there have been several publications issued by the Federation no copy has ever found its way to me, a subscriber, nor yet on inquiry at the office could I obtain any trace of the fact of my name being recorded as a member of the Federation, and it is no excuse to affirm 'you should apply to the local secretary,' because as a properly conducted business concern every name should be recorded in the archives of the head office outside the local register, if that person is a member.

Again, the Federation has been in vogue for over a year yet no balance sheet has been vouchsafed, and it would be interesting to know how the subscriptions are spent which are so glibly demanded, and what services are rendered in return for the outlay. I must admit while I have always been able to derive both profit and instruction from the zeal of the clergy, for all the good or benefit I have ever received from the Federation, beyond the knowledge of the fact I was an unknown quantity as far as they were concerned, either as to membership or a recipient of their publications, I fancy I would have done much better to use my subscription to defray personal expenses, and which I intend to do in the future until I am assured of better promise and more business-like aptitude than at present displayed by those in command.

Apart from all this is it kind or fair to stigmatise our friends thus, who, in their laudable anxiety to help in the temporal affairs of the Church, try to bring all these undertakings into business lines to avoid disappointment or what is worse. It is not only the right but the duty of every intelligent Catholic to weigh the pros and cons of any undertaking which may be proposed and which they will be called upon to maintain: otherwise any simple person seized with chimerical ideas (though good in themselves yet not necessarily practical) will be tempted to foist the same upon the credulity and generosity of others. In matters of faith or morals the authority of the Church is unquestionable and supreme; but there are no Vatican Decrees laying down incontrovertible conditions as to how temporal institutions should be conducted, apart from the religious aspect, so in purely lay affairs, especially these involving fiscal administration, the greatest care and supervision should be exercised by those responsible for the liability or likely to be made so.—I am, etc.,

GEO. LAMBERT.

Wellington.

[Charges of not publishing a balance sheet ought not to be so lightly made. A full financial report and balance sheet, covering the year ending February 14, 1914, were presented at the meeting of the Dominion Council held on February 18, 1914; and the balance sheet was published in full in the N.Z. Tablet of February 26, 1914. Fair and reasonable criticism will doubtless be welcomed by the Executive of the Federation, as being in every way calculated to strengthen its position. We have, however, excised portion of our correspondent's letter, for we cannot, at this hour of the day, publish letters arguing against the necessity of an organisation which in America, England, Australia,

and New Zealand, has received the warm approval and hearty endorsement of the Catholic hierarchy.—Ed. N.Z.T.]

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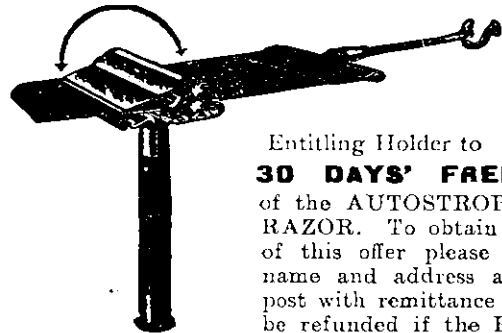
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