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By the Australian Catholic Truth Society.

This Book is identical with the Australian Catholic Prayer Book, published at the request of the Third Australian Plenary Council, which is so highly recommended.

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WANTED

WANTED, a MAN to do all Farm Work and Milk.—Apply Mrs. Wm. Crosbie, Menzies Ferry, Edendale.

INFORMATION WANTED

JAMES USSHER and JOHN USSHER, sons of John Ussher or Usher and Jane Smith, brothers to William Ussher, natives of County Galway, Ireland; left Ireland about fifty years ago. Information wanted by their nephew, the Right Rev. Monsignor James M. Ussher, Calle Pringles 856, Buenos Aires, South America. Any information will also be thankfully received at office of this paper. Will AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC PAPERS kindly copy?

MESSAGE OF POPE LEO XIII. TO THE N.Z. TABLET.

Pergant Directores et Scriptores New Zealand Tablet, Apostolica Benedictione confortati, Religionis et Justitiae causam promovere per vias Veritatis et Pacis.

Die 4 Aprilis, 1900.

LEO XIII., P.M.

TRANSLATION.—Fortified by the Apostolic Blessing, let the Directors and Writers of the New Zealand Tablet continue to promote the cause of Religion and Justice by the ways of Truth and Peace.

April 4, 1900

LEO XIII., Pope.



THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 1910.

'OFFICIALISM RUN MAD'



HE phrase was used some weeks ago, if we remember rightly, by an irate member of the Otago Education Board in describing a certain action of our New Zealand Education Department, but the applicability of the description is by no means confined to the occasion on which it was employed. In this matter of muddling, unintelligent, and sometimes mischievous officialism we in New Zealand have enough to put up with in all conscience.

It is one of those cases where 'appetite grows by what it feeds on,' and the tendency to pettifogging red-tapeism in some of our State departments has of late patently and visibly increased. We can still, however, lay to our souls the consoling unction that in this particular matter we are not as bad as some of our neighbors. We have not, for example, in all the ranks of Dominion officialdom, a single member who, in capacity for meddlesome and vexatious interference, could hold a candle to one Mr. James Gray, ex-Methodist minister, who is dressed in a little brief authority as Secretary of the State Children's Department of South Australia. This gentleman appears to belong to a class of busy folks who are like the hornets—never busy except with their stings. We do not know how long he has held his present position, but of late years, as a result of the apparently settled policy of this gentleman, Catholic charities and institutions have been harassed and worried, and nagged at and criticised, and pestered with pin-pricks, till a point has been reached at which patience ceases to be a virtue. So long as the Secretary of the S.A. State Children's Department keeps within his

legal rights he has, of course, to be obeyed, and in the past he has, as a matter of fact, been carefully and scrupulously obeyed. 'Thou hast seen,' says *King Lear*, 'a farmer's dog bark at a beggar? . . . And the creature run from the cur? There thou mightst behold the great image of authority: a dog's obeyed in office.' But the obedience due to office does not extend a hair's-breadth beyond the limits of its legitimate authority. In some of his later demands, Mr. Gray, in the opinion of high legal authority as well as of most reasonable and fair-minded people, has egregiously exceeded his legal powers; and the Archbishop of Adelaide has quietly but firmly defied him.

The past history of the dealings of the Secretary of the State Children's Department with various Catholic charities—related by the Archbishop in a pamphlet published in September last—has been already commented on in these columns, and we confine ourselves therefore for the present to Mr. Gray's latest vagaries. These have been described by Archbishop O'Reilly, tersely, forcefully, and straightforwardly, but at the same time in a dignified and studiously moderate way, in a second pamphlet just issued. Out of a number of petty and utterly unjustifiable annoyances inflicted by Mr. Gray we select two conspicuous specimens. The first had reference to the Girls' Reformatory at Kapunda. Mr. Gray objected to the appointment of an aged and entirely suitable priest as resident chaplain to the institution. The absence of a resident chaplain meant that the Sisters and inmates would have to make a six-mile journey every Sunday in order to hear Mass. In view of the grave inconvenience caused by Mr. Gray's interference Archbishop O'Reilly, freely and voluntarily, of his own motion, decided to close the Reformatory. The inmates were accordingly transferred to another Catholic institution, and the building was in due time dismantled.

Then followed a vexatious sequel. In accordance with law it was necessary that a proclamation should appear in the *Government Gazette* notifying the fact of the closing. It would—one would have thought—have been a simple matter to frame a proclamation which would have complied with all essentials, and would have stated the actual facts in a plain and inoffensive way. But that apparently is not Mr. Gray's style. Section 26 of the S.A. State Children's Act provides that 'the Governor may, on the report of the Council, if dissatisfied with the condition or management of any private Reformatory School, or private institution, by proclamation abolish it as a Reformatory School, etc.' Mr. Gray professed to feel himself compelled by his reading of the Act to have a proclamation inserted in the *Gazette* to the effect that the State Children's Council was 'dissatisfied' with the condition of the school, and that the Reformatory had therefore been 'abolished.' A proclamation so worded obviously conveys a painful imputation regarding the management of the institution, and Archbishop O'Reilly promptly protested. In addition, his Grace consulted an Adelaide legal firm of high standing, who, in a lengthy considered opinion entirely disagreed with Mr. Gray's reading of the law, that an expression of 'dissatisfaction' was necessary. As a matter of fact, there never has been a word of complaint against the institution. It has always received praise in the annual report of the State Children's Council, and the Secretary had himself stated, in a letter dated September 14, 1909, that 'the council has a profound appreciation of the work done at St. John's Reformatory.' Mr. Gray admitted that the 'dissatisfaction' referred to in the proclamation was purely 'formal.' 'In other words'—as the solicitor's opinion expresses it—'there is no dissatisfaction at all, but it is thought necessary to tell his Excellency the exact contrary to what is the fact.'

Since then Mr. Gray has broken out in a fresh place, and in a manner still more wantonly and glaringly offensive. This time it is the Orphanages that are victims of his rampant officialism. An Amendment of the State Children's Act already referred to provides that every person (subject to certain exceptions) 'who, not being licensed as a foster mother by the council, shall receive into his or her charge or custody any child under the age of seven years to adopt, rear, nurse, or otherwise maintain for gain