

ARROWTOWN ART UNION

Holders of Tickets in connection with the forthcoming Arrowtown Art Union are requested to forward Butts, Remittances, and Unsold Tickets not later than August 18 to the Sisters of St. Joseph, Arrowtown.

MISSING FRIENDS

JOHN CALLAN, Ohio Home, Wellington, is anxious to know the Whereabouts of MARY ANN CALLAN, of County Tyrone, Ireland, who landed in Lyttelton about twenty years ago.

THE PROVINCIAL ECCLESIASTICAL SEMINARY OF NEW ZEALAND, HOLY CROSS COLLEGE, MOSGIEL.

IN conformit with arrangements made at the First Provincial Synod, held in Wellington in 1899, this Seminary has been established for the Education of Students from all parts of New Zealand who aspire to the Ecclesiastical State.

Students twelve years of age and upwards will be admitted. Candidates for admission are required to present satisfactory testimonials from the parochial clergy, and from the superiors of schools or colleges where they may have studied.

The Pension is £35 a year, payable half-yearly in advance. It provides for Board and Lodging, Tuition, School Books, Furniture, Bedding and House Linen.

The Extra Charges are: Washing, £1 10s a year, and Medicine and Medical Attendance if required.

Students will provide their own wearing apparel, including the Soutane, as well as Surplice for assistance in Choir.

The Seminary is under the patronage and direction of the Archbishop and Bishops of New Zealand, and under the immediate personal supervision of the Right Rev. Bishop of Dunedin.

Donations towards the establishment of Bursaries for the Free Education of Ecclesiastical Students will be thankfully received.

The course of studies is arranged to enable students who enter the College to prepare for Matriculation and the various Examinations for Degrees at the University.

The College reopens on Tuesday, February 15.

For further particulars apply to

THE RECTOR,
Holy Cross College, Mosgiel

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

Pergant Directores et Scriptores New Zealand Tablet, Apostolica Benedictione confortati, Religionis et Justitiæ 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, JULY 21, 1910.

SOME 'MISSING LINKS'



HE missing link between 'the highest form of ape and the lowest form of man' is a long-felt want of the Darwinian and neo-Darwinian school of biology. The demand has created an uncertain and spasmodic supply—of a kind that, on examination, has thus far invariably turned out to be even less genuine than some of the recently made 'real antiques' that un-wary travellers purchase from street pedlars in Old-World cities. Every few years—generally in the dull season of the newspapers—word goes round that the real, genuine, and only original missing link has been discovered on some portion of the earth's crust so distant from civilisation or so difficult of access that the course of inquiry is slow and costly. And thus the legend secures a brief run. But the connecting link invariably contrives

to vanish like a jack-in-the-box or a borrowed florin in the hands of a travelling conjurer. Yet hope springs eternal in the breast of the neo-Darwinian, and his evergreen confidence in the final discovery of the half-ape half-man is touching in the extreme. He reminds one of the story told some time ago by our contemporary, the *Boston Pilot*, of an enthusiastic amateur fisherman who was looking for tarpon in southern waters. He wrote home to his expectant friends that although he had not seen any thus far, he was quite sure of getting one next day. 'In fact,' said he, 'you may say I have practically caught him.' The missing link has been 'practically caught' once or twice in the islands of the East—on the last occasion in the form of a skeleton in Java. But it has turned up more frequently in what the *N.Z. Tablet* has before described as that Land of the Thousand Fictions, the wild heart of Darkest Africa. Stanley's bright and intelligent dwarfs of the Congo forest were prematurely proclaimed as the long-lost 'missing link.' And then—according to cable messages which appeared in the *New Zealand dailies*—the long-lost 'ape-like ancestor of the human race' was once more 'discovered' in another tribe of dwarfs whom a French explorer was alleged to have knocked up against in some unstated region, which was described with broad, and perhaps intentional, vagueness as 'Central Africa.' Needless to say, that 'missing link' has gone the way of all the rest.

The story of missing links generally, and of the man-ape missing link in particular, is not at all calculated to create confidence in any new tale that may be imported or in any new 'discovery' that may be announced. The discovery of the missing link—in fact, of two distinct and separate links—between birds and reptiles was proclaimed in the early sixties with sound of trumpet and beat of drum. One was the fossil of a lizard (named the pterodactyle) which could fly; the other was that of a bird—the archæopteryx of the oolite—which had a somewhat longer tail than usual, and moreover had a set of teeth like a lizard's (or an eel's). Those ardent spirits who were in too great haste to await such an unconsidered trifle as a verification of preliminary guess work, took the sackbut and the symphony and sang the discovery of a reptile that was half-bird and of a bird that was half-reptile; and, with the aid of the curious and wonderful logic that serves the camp-followers of science as a substitute for the art of reasoning they proclaimed that, therefore, the supposed lizard-like bird was a lineal descendant of the supposedly bird-like lizard! Then forth stepped Professor Owen and destroyed the golden legend of the discovered connecting link. He proved that the pterodactyle had no more wing than a bat or a flying squirrel has, but merely a membrane; that it was as true and genuine a reptile as the alligator or the totara lizard; that the archæopteryx was shaped like the peregrine falcon, or, rather, like the grouse, and that it was as real and perfect a bird as a grey goose or a crested canary. A few years later—it was in 1868—a thrill of excitement went through the scientific world when Professor Huxley announced the great discovery of what we may term the missing link between inert or lifeless and living matter. The missing link was a sticky ooze or slime brought up from the bottom of the sea. It was—with the usual indiscreet haste—proclaimed to the world as Nature's grand store of protoplasm—the source of all the life that swarms upon the earth. Professor Huxley described it as a 'sheet of living matter' lining the bottom of the sea, and called it by the now rather too famous name, bathybius. Such a discovery, even if verified, would, of course, leave the proven need of a First Cause and Creator and Author of Life precisely where it was before. Nevertheless, an *Io triumphe* went up from the leaders of materialism. Their exultation was, however, short-lived. Huxley, Haeckel, Strauss, Schmidt, and the rest were in too great haste to wait and 'check their guess' or 'explode their conjecture.' 'And the consequence was'—says a recent authority upon biology—'that in a few years the whole scientific world "exploded" with laughter at what Mivart aptly nicknamed "Huxley's seamarer's-nest."' The 'grand store of protoplasm' was—as Huxley himself had to admit later on—nothing more than a little harmless and lifeless sulphate of lime! 'With the bathybius,' said Virchow regretfully, 'disappeared our greatest hope of a demonstration (of the origin of life from matter).' And Haeckel had called the vanished and derided bathybius 'the main support of the modern theory of evolution.'

But what if that supposed intermediary creature between ape and man should at length overcome his hitherto invincible bashfulness and really appear *in propria persona* upon the world's stage? What then? He would leave the theory of the 'ascent of man' in practically the same position as before. Evolution (and especially atheistic evolution) would still remain what it is to-day, a mere theory or hypothesis, which, so far from being proven by scientifically demonstrated facts, has great classes of facts which it ought to, but cannot, explain, or which are set hard