

The abstract desirableness of a reduction in the price of the *Tablet* has, of course, long been recognised by those responsible for the production of the paper; but the problem of giving effect to the long-cherished desire has been by no means so simple as it looks. The *Tablet*, like any other business concern, has to pay its way; and the question, in all such cases, resolves itself into one of ways and means. In its present size and with the present circulation and quality of paper, the *Tablet*, with the postage which we have to pay, costs us very nearly sixpence to produce. On that score alone a reduction to threepence requires some courage. The increased issue of the paper—which, we think, we may safely anticipate—will, of course, lessen the cost of production, and will gradually diminish the loss under this head until, we hope, it will be reduced to the vanishing point. But that will certainly take time. Again, owing to the scattered nature of the Catholic population it costs considerably more to get the *Tablet* to the subscribers than is the case with the Catholic paper in most other countries. We cannot send the paper in bundles by rail. Every copy has to be posted; and, as can be easily understood, our postage bill is a heavy item. For the same reason—the configuration of the country and the scattered nature of the population—the cost of collecting subscriptions is unusually large. That, we may remark in passing, is why we offer such exceptional advantages to those who pay in advance, and why we so earnestly urge this method on all our subscribers. A final consideration which was calculated to make us weigh long and well the question of a reduction in price is the fact that such a step is practically irrevocable. When the price of a paper has once been reduced, it is virtually impossible to ever increase it again.

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For these reasons it will be evident, as we have said, that the question of reducing the price of a paper by 50 per cent. at one stroke is not such a simple matter as might at first sight appear. The one fact which justifies the step, and which makes such a forward move possible, is the present exceedingly prosperous condition of the *Tablet*. Ever since Dr. Cleary took charge as editor in 1898 the *N.Z. Tablet* has been steadily on the up grade; from that day to this, the paper has never looked back. By his extraordinary gifts, both on the literary and on the administrative side, he laid broad and deep the foundation for the future success of the paper; and to-day we are reaping what Dr. Cleary sowed. Not only has the paper progressed, but it has progressed in ever-increasing ratio. Each year has been better than the last. The year 1911, for example, was a record up to date, both for circulation and revenue. The number of new subscribers and the amount of revenue for the present year—which ends with us on September 30—already easily eclipse the record for 1911, and for all other years. A glance at our advertising columns will show that that department is flourishing, notwithstanding that some time ago we made a substantial increase in our tariff rates. As a result of the buoyant revenue, the directors—to whose energy, zeal, and business capacity, share-holders and subscribers are greatly indebted—have been able to make large additions to the reserve fund, which is now in a very strong position.

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Although all the omens are thus propitious, and although all possible safeguards have been taken, so radical a change as that which is proposed cannot be made without involving some element of risk. The reduction of the price of the *Tablet* from 6d to 3d is, in fact, a great act of faith on the part of those responsible for it—faith in the paper, faith in the staff, and faith, above all, in the Catholic people of New Zealand. Hitherto, the one serious criticism levelled against the *Tablet* has been that the price, if not excessive, was certainly something of a tax on the poorer of our people. There was something in the objection; and we believe that the removal of that difficulty will be followed by a generous increase in our subscribers' list. Evidence is already to hand that our belief is well

founded. Our traveller's present trip in the Auckland province has been, we might almost say, phenomenally successful. During the past two weeks—operating on the basis of the new rate of subscription—he has sent in well over one hundred new orders. We need hardly say that we look with confidence to the clergy to specially help in extending the sphere of usefulness of the Catholic paper; and they have been already circularised as to the best methods of assisting us. Apart from the enrolment of new subscribers there are two ways in which our people—whether priests or laymen—can render us especial service. Firstly, if anyone has printing work, however small or however great, which he can conveniently have executed at Dunedin, let him send it to the *Tablet* office. We can guarantee thorough satisfaction; and this collateral source of revenue may be made an important aid in maintaining the success of the paper. Secondly, when purchasing goods from a firm which advertises in the *Tablet*, let our people *make it an invariable practice* to mention the *Tablet* advertisement. This may seem a very small matter; but we can assure our readers that every such reference, however slight or casual, means money to the Catholic paper. We have now placed the position fully and fairly before our people; and we confidently leave the issue with them. The *Tablet* has its imperfections, no doubt; but it has behind it an honorable record of earnest and strenuous work, from the days when, under Bishop Moran, it had to fight almost for the very existence of the Catholic body. That it has deserved well of the Catholics of New Zealand no one, we think, will question; and we face the future with full confidence that in the progressive step which it is now taking its claims will once more be loyally and enthusiastically recognised.

Notes

The Reduced Subscription

It is hardly necessary, perhaps, to mention—but we do so to avoid even the possibility of misunderstanding—that in connection with the reduced subscription to the *N.Z. Tablet*, all subscribers who have already paid in advance at the old rate will have the amount fully credited to them on the new scale as from 1st October, 1912.

American Catholic Societies and Divorce

The following message from New York appeared in Friday's cables: 'The American Federation of Catholic Societies has passed a resolution denouncing divorce on any terms, and regretting its growing prevalence.' The only remarkable thing about this message is the fact that the press agent should ever have found time to cable such a sensible item.

Scholarship Candidates' Applications

In connection with the matter of scholarships we desire to draw the attention of teachers to the advisableness of obtaining immediate information from the secretary of their local Education Board as to the date limit within which candidates' notice of their intention to compete must be sent in. In respect to Board scholarships, the date varies slightly in different education districts, but full information, together with forms of application, may be had on application to the Board secretary. In regard to National scholarships, we have been semi-officially informed by telephone that the examination takes place on November 28 and 29, and that candidates are required to send in their applications before September 16; but we advise teachers who may be interested to obtain direct official information for themselves.

'The Duties of Catholic Workmen'

Writing under this heading, the *Melbourne Tribune* has some wise words on a plain and practical duty which is staring every Catholic worker in the face. We quote a portion as follows: 'As probably 80 per cent. of our