

INFLUENCE OF CATHOLICISM IN MODERN ENGLAND.

Auckland.

In a former paper some evidence was quoted by me from the testimony of enemies to show the rapid, and to Presbyterian clergymen the alarming, progress of the Roman Catholic religion in modern Scotland, a fact which attracted the notice of the General Assembly of the National Kirk, so long as 40 years ago.

We learn now from an article in a recent number of the *Contemporary Review*, an influential London periodical, that in England Catholic charity will be found foremost among all others, and out of all proportion to the money and power of the Catholic population in providing decent homes and the best education for the poor, and to teaching them the science of sciences—Christianity. "The proficiency of Catholic children in secular knowledge is certainly advanced," the Reviewer (a Catholic) maintains, "by a concurrent proficiency in religious learning." There is a clear national reaction, he alleges, against the purely secular system; and the instinct of Englishmen demands more for their money than the bare instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic. The *London Times*, I noticed long ago, expressed an opinion that the people of England had a natural repugnance both to education rates, and exclusive secular teaching in primary schools. This reviewer but confirms the opinion of the *Times*. The like "instinct" influences the public in the province of Auckland to be dissatisfied with an exclusively secular education, in their primary schools. They are resolved to have Christian instruction of some sort given in the school. We know that in this colony religious instruction must be either Catholic or Protestant. Unsectarian Christianity is a delusion and a snare. Let the Bible alone be the text book, apart from any "Catechism," and see what sort of a religious creed either master or pupils would believe in. Any Government primary school, I maintain, which is not purely secular, will, and must be either a Roman Catholic or a Protestant school. No use beating about the bush—honesty is the best policy in the long run in educational as well as other matters. Roman Catholics in this colony will be forced in the future most likely, as they now are, to pay directly or indirectly for schools which are either purely secular or Protestant, unless God turn the hearts of our rulers to justice, and Catholic schools here, as in England, shall receive a measure of Government aid, on fair conditions. That is not probable, considering the strength of religious prejudice and the latitudinarian principles prevailing among the people of this colony; and Catholics must make up their minds to rely on themselves alone to provide a good education for their children. They must be content to suffer for their fidelity to their Church. To suffer in such a cause is an honour and high privilege. They must make up by zeal what they want in money and numbers. In commenting on that part of the Reviewer's article, in which he declares that in England there is a reaction in the public mind against secularism, the clever editor of the *Auckland Evening Star* says:—Yet it does not appear that they are particularly anxious about any special religious truth. How can he say so when the Church of England, the Roman Catholics, and the Dissenters have such large educational establishments recognised and subsidised by the Government. The old flags of Protestantism, he says, are waved in vain, and there is a wide-spread, indifference, to the variations of creed. Might he not say an indifference to any religious creed at all? He winds up with this remark which does credit to his judgment:—

Meaning, intelligent and impartial persons can judge if Catholic charity be not vindicating in its narrow English limits, the claim of the Catholic Church to be the most serviceable of all existing Churches towards the solution of social problems, new and old, and towards the higher development of man. It is well when the Protestant press makes such appeals to the judgment of "intelligent and impartial persons" in regard to the claims of the Catholic Church to be the best educator and reformer of the people, especially in the humbler and most neglected portions of society. Whichever Church succeeds best in providing for the education and spiritual interests of these numerous classes, and does most to raise them to a state of respectability, comfort, and contentment, the popular instinct of Englishmen will be apt to regard as the true Church of God. They will need little of learned argument or theological controversy to prove that it is so. If the clergy of any Church can rescue the ignorant and neglected English poor from that degradation in which they have so long been sunk, it ought to be the Catholic clergy, and especially the religious orders male and female among them. Many years ago now Mr. Kay in his elaborate report on "The Industrial Orders" dedicated to Lord John, now Earl Russell, stated that he had been told by an English clergyman, neither a bigot nor indifferent to his own creed, that many of the humbler ranks in England were going over to the Church of Rome, and if the English clergy did not bestir themselves the movement would in a few years become general, and the English poor would be lost to the Church of England entirely. They were persuaded that the Church of England was the rich man's, the Church of Rome the poor man's Church. They said that the Catholic clergy practised Christianity, the English clergy did but preach it, or little more. I quote the import of his words only.

ST. MARY'S SCHOOLS, NELSON.

(To the Editor of the *Colonist*).

SIR,—Since the passing of the new "Education Act," I was led to entertain, to a certain extent, hopes as to the continuation of Government aid to subsidised schools, and principally to St. Mary's schools in Nelson. It was mentioned in the House that the subsidy would be granted to the end of the financial year. Mr. Lamarché, when visiting Nelson, had stated that such would be the case. I depended so well on such authorities that it is only a few days since I published in the papers that St. Mary's schools were to be re-opened as usual under same management and same teachers. But I was not a little surprised when this morning I received from the Chairman of the Nelson Edu-

cation Board the notice that "no provision had been made in the Education Act, 1877, for continuing such subsidy to St. Mary's schools as they had hitherto received from the Board; that I was therefore recommended to refer to the Educational Department."

Many years ago, when the Nelson Education system was established by law, the Provincial Government gave for every existing school a sum of £2 per head for six months before the new Act was put in force; and here, with the new Education Act, we have not got so much as six days' notice.

Who would ever have expected that, in a land where British liberal institutions are a remarkable feature, a school which has been established now twenty-eight years in Nelson, which is consequently the oldest school in this province, should be stopped without a day's notice? That teachers—one of them 25 years in office in that school; some of them of superior learning, brought at great expense from the Mother Country—should be told on a sudden, that their services are no more wanted, and that there is "no provision made for them in the new Act?" That large school-rooms in which many thousand children have been instructed, should now be closed, and unceremoniously put aside, without even a small recognition from a Government which has been all the time benefited by them?

To receive notice—not even a week before, but a week after, that is, on the 7th January, 1878—that, since the 1st of the same month, no more aid should be given to such schools, which schools were attended only the other day, by nearly 500 children: this is one of those wonders which can only be seen in our antipodes.

The representatives of the people affirmed that no publican's business should be destroyed without compensation being paid; but it is calmly proposed to demolish our schools without a whisper being heard of compensating us. Yet we bought land and incurred great liability, relying upon the law as it then stood; now, by what is in effect *ex post facto* legislation, we are most cruelly placed, from no fault of ours, in a position of great embarrassment, and yet we see that in other countries—for instance in Austria—teachers are paid by the State, provided with residences near the school-house, and are allowed superannuation pensions, which, if they had served ten years, are extended to their widows and orphans under fourteen.

However, whether we are or are not to have compensation (and there is always some allowance in reserve for old officers who have served under the Government), I maintain the advertisement that I have published last week, that St. Mary's schools will re-open on the 21st inst., and if there be any alteration, due notice will be given.—I am, &c.,

A. M. GARIN, C. Priest.

Nelson, January 8, 1878.

[This is the first fruit of the rejection by Parliament of the reasonable compromise contained in the Nelson Education Act, and unquestionably the quiet that has so long prevailed here cannot be expected to continue, unless a wiser course is adopted. That the payment to St. Mary's schools, till 30th June will be made is certain, that is, if good faith is still to be found among our public men. The present difficulty seems to arise solely from the want of a minister at headquarters to instruct his subordinates, and when the Hon. Mr. Sheehan returns to his duties, there is no reason to apprehend that the promised subsidy will be withheld. This after all will do little to satisfy the justice of the case, and we feel sure the Education Board can, if so inclined, discover some means of continuing these admirable schools, even after the financial year has passed.—Editor of *Colonist*.]

"THE WARRIOR BROTHERS" SCHOOL, WELLINGTON.

THE annual distribution of prizes and a dramatic entertainment took place at the schoolroom on Thursday, the 20th December. The drama chosen was entitled, "Sebastian;" or, the "Roman Martyr," which was played in four acts and to a crowded house. The characters were extremely well supported, and excited great applause. Master Ishore Pagon took the part of Calpurnius, a Pedantic Philosopher, and he acted his part very well, creating much interest by his speeches. The other performers were Masters Chas. Bonnington, Emperor of Rome; James Eddie, the Martyr; Robert Dixon, Pancratius, the Martyr's boy; J. Reardon, Diogenes; and several others, there being in all 21 characters. On the conclusion of the drama the prizes were distributed.

The prize-list is as follows:—

Fourth Class (the highest).—First Division—R. Dixon, 1; P. Pagon, 2; W. Coffey, 3; C. Bonnington, 4; H. Blandford, 5; S. Mahoney, 6. Second Division—J. Murphy, 1; J. Carpenter, 2; P. London, 3; J. Reardon, 4; F. Dooley, 5; M. Hyland, 6.

Third Class.—First Division—R. Carpenter, 1; H. Reid, 2; W. Prideaux, 3; F. Oakes, 4; J. Allan, 5; W. Fraser, 6. Second Division—H. Crombie, 1; W. North, 2; H. Greenfield, 3; D. Reardon, 4; J. Sheridan, 5; A. Bell, 6.

Second Class.—First Division—J. Murray, 1; M. Carpenter, 2; J. Ryan, 3; A. Percy, 4; W. Scullian, 5; M. Rains, 6. Second Division—P. Nedd, 1; W. Hunter, 2; F. Bonnington, 3; J. Gamble, 4; J. Fitzgibbon, 5; J. King, 6.

First Class (lowest).—First Division—T. Hodgkins, 1; P. O'Shea, 2; E. Curry, 3; M. Murray, 4; S. Landbrook, 5; H. Blake, 6. Second Division—A. Blake, 1; W. Gailford, 2; F. Follas, 3; S. Hanlon, 4; H. Dooley, 5; G. Bonner, 6.

THE *Times* bears testimony to the energy with which the Catholic Clergy in France devote themselves to their work, as an active, aggressive, and disciplined army, far more than before when Gallicism was among them.

ONE of the cruellest blows ever struck at the sanitary reputation of a town has just been dealt to Berlin by Dr. Schweinfurt, the well-known African traveller. The doctor is about to return to Africa, and the reason he assigns for this intention is that he "is not able to support the Berlin climate."—*Har.*