

BISHOP MORAN'S DEFENCE OF FATHER HENNEBERY.

THE following report, which we have taken from the *Otago Daily Times* of the 1st inst., should have been inserted in last week's TABLET. It was only discovered as we were about to go to press that it had been overlooked:—

The Most Rev. Dr. Moran, Bishop of Dunedin, yesterday morning during the course of some remarks on education, referred to Press criticisms on Father Hennebery. He said it was a matter of great congratulation to see their schools flourishing as they were. Better schools did not exist in this or any other country, and he hoped soon to have a Catholic college. Looking back for the last seven years they must acknowledge that a great deal had been done for their spiritual and temporal interests. Were they poorer to-day notwithstanding all they had done for the honour and glory of God and the promotion of Catholic education? Was not the congregation far raised above the position it held seven years ago? Instead of losing anything they had been the recipients of great temporal favours. His Lordship referred to the churches at South Dunedin and Port Chalmers, which he said would soon be finished. During his absence a considerable amount of excitement was caused in the town by a portion of the Press. He was very sorry for this, and thought that it was not wise in not having confined itself to its legitimate sphere. Excitement had also been caused in other places where Father Hennebery had visited, and they were aware by the statements of the congregation and clergy there that he had been grossly belied and calumniated by the Press. He (the speaker) was also misrepresented by a Press telegram, statements were put into his mouth which he never made, and the reason he did not contradict was, because if a man were to give a contradiction to every separate misrepresentation he would not have time for anything else. Father Hennebery made statements regarding the state of morality in the United States of America as a warning to the congregation, in order that they might be able to see how necessary it was to bring up the rising generation in the knowledge, fear and love of God, and to show how important it was not to allow their children to be subjected to the influence of secular education. The Press took up the matter and made a row about it. He, out of feelings of gratitude for all the missionary had done, wrote a short letter to the Press, and it was said that there was a difference of a million between the figures of Father Hennebery and his with reference to the number of infanticides. If they did happen to differ it must have been a slip of the memory or of the pen. It was quite clear that he intended to give Father Hennebery's statements as the missionary himself had given them. He also used the word "infanticide." Father Hennebery had used other language, but as he wished to be concise he fixed upon one word to convey the idea substantially that Father Hennebery had in view. The word was used in its literal though not its legal signification. It was endeavoured to be proved by figures purporting to be a true statement of the state of things in France, with the intention of disproving the truthfulness of Father Hennebery's statements, but those figures as to France and other countries were not to the purpose. They no more disproved Father Hennebery's statements than they proved the altitude of the mountains in the moon. From the statements in certain newspapers no argument could be drawn and no syllogism could be formed. There was no minor proposition, and the validity of the argument could not be tested. It should be shown that the state of morality in France in reference to this subject was satisfactory, whereas the whole world knew that the contrary was the fact. Reading for many years prepared him to accept the statement of Father Hennebery, and he had read again and again, in the writings of even Protestant clergymen, that the state of morality in the great Republic was appalling, that a hindrance was put to the increase of population, and the only hope for the future of America was the Catholic element and the other element brought up under Catholic influences. For years he had been aware that systematic efforts were being made to teach the rising generation modes of preventing the increase of population, and with horror he had read the statement of a certain popular female lecturer that "If people imagine American women would consent to be the mothers of future Americans they laboured under a grievous mistake." It was with extreme sorrow and feelings of utter disgust that he felt himself called upon to touch upon this subject at all, and if he were placed in the dilemma to choose between lying under the imputation of a story-teller, or of entering into the details of this matter, he would accept the former position in preference to the latter. It was a remarkable thing that at first the Press ridiculed all Father Hennebery's statements, but with his letter it confined itself to the question of infanticide, and spoke no more of the other three statements. It was impossible to evade the conclusion that this was done, because it was easy to procure evidence on the three first statements, but not so easy as to the last, owing to the peculiarity of its nature. Father Hennebery's statement was made on the authority of competent witnesses, and it had not yet been disproved. It was a matter on which they could not make a mathematical calculation as on other subjects. It could only be estimated from the authority of experienced men. His Lordship said in contention that he still believed Father Hennebery's statement not to be exaggerated. It could be said, no doubt, that it was a terrible charge—almost incredible, and opposed to common sense. He admitted all this, but terrible as it was—incredible as it was, and opposed as it was to common sense, it was, nevertheless, he believed, true, and it existed because it was the natural outcome of a system of education—in a Christian community—opposed to reason and common sense. It was not a subject upon which he wished to dwell, and it caused him very great pain to lay it before the congregation. He concluded by asking the congregation to persevere with the system of education they had commenced, and to let their success in the past be an encouragement for the future.—*Daily Times*, April 1.

PROFESSOR STANICH continues to work wonders in the cure of persons in and around Dunedin who are afflicted with deafness. The Professor most liberally places his services at the disposal of those whose circumstances prevent them from remunerating him, and many such persons owe him a life-long debt of gratitude. In another column will be found several *bonâ fide* testimonials addressed to him.

NOMINAL CATHOLICS.

WHENEVER the *Argus* happens to light upon a nominal Catholic, who complains of the action of the clergy in the matter of education, it grows quite sympathetic.

Quite recently such an opportunity for the show of solicitude offered. As usual, the *Argus* made the wide distinction between the clergy and the Catholics—a distinction which every Catholic must at once reject if he knows the fundamental principles of his faith. A Catholic is a Catholic only as long as he listens to the voice of the Church. Authority derived from heaven, inerrancy guaranteed by Divine promise, and a corresponding obligation of submission to authority, and docility to the teaching of the Church, are the fundamental principles of Catholicity. To say, therefore, that a Catholic is led by the priests is to say that he acts consistently in accord with the principles of his religion. A Catholic who complains of the teaching of his Church virtually sets himself above her.

We are weary of hearing such cant as 'priestridden Catholics' and 'independent Catholics.' The former are ruled and guided by the priests, in accordance with a faith common to priests and people; the latter are not Catholics at all.

The *Argus* informs its readers that the Catholic who sends his children to State schools "exposes himself to oburgation and abuse." We think the most severe oburgation must be that administered by his own conscience.

No Catholic child is compelled by the ecclesiastical authorities to grow up in ignorance. The Catholic schools provide an education which we may fairly compare with that obtainable in the State schools, the assertion of a "Perplexed Parent" notwithstanding. We are sufficiently acquainted with the mode of action of Catholics of that class to place very little reliance on their mere statements. They are glad of an excuse to escape paying the little required of them for the support of the schools. Besides, a man who is false to the religion in which his forefathers lived, and for which, perhaps, some of them died, can expect little credence when he makes assertions derogatory to the reputation of the Catholic schools.

But supposing, for argument's sake, that the instruction in the Catholic schools be slightly inferior, or very much inferior, to that provided in the State establishments, what then is the Catholic to do? Is he justified in sending his children to a State school? We have no hesitation in replying in the negative. The Catholic must know that there is a question of personal advantage, and one of general good, involved in his action regarding his child. He has duties to his offspring and to his Church. Both the one and the other class of obligations are violated by the parent who, having in his neighbourhood a Catholic school, sends his child to a State school.

He violates his duty to his child, inasmuch as he deprives him of the means of learning and practising his religion. He does his child an injury by instilling into his tender mind a spirit of defiance and opposition to the teachings of the Church. For the boy goes to Mass on Sunday, and hears parents who send their children to these truly godless schools upbraided with their infidelity to the teachings of the Church, and on Monday his father sends him, despite the warning of the priest, to the very schools the Church condemns. Thus the child, from his earliest youth, is taught to disregard the behests of the Church, to grow up contemning her teachings, and the result naturally follows—the School boy becomes the liberal Catholic; that is, not a Catholic at all. Can a Catholic parent be in the least "perplexed" as to his proper course when this dismal consequence comes up before him in all its melancholy truth and reality? Will he prefer to a sound Catholic faith, and pure Catholic morality, a trifle extra of arithmetic and geography? If he do, his belief in the surpassing excellence of the soul, in the paramount importance of that soul's salvation, must be lamentably dimmed. Every Catholic who is "perplexed" and follows, as an escape from his perplexity, the councils of short-sighted love of earthly gain injures, as far as in him lies, not only his child, but the Catholic cause.

While we do not find fault with the few Catholics who, in the country districts, from the scattered nature and the poverty of Catholic population, have no Catholic school in their neighbourhood, we say emphatically that, if a Catholic must make a choice between a Catholic school, even of inferior efficiency, and a State school, he is bound to send his child to the Catholic school or cease to be a Catholic. He must make the choice in the same spirit as did the early Christians, when position and emolument were held out as the reward of apostasy, and the rack and the gibbet the punishment of fidelity. He must make it in the spirit of the Irish Catholics when ignorance or Protestantism were the alternatives presented to them.

Let him consult for himself by ceasing to defy God through His Church, and let him not render himself responsible for the spiritual murder of his child; let him show tenderness to himself by saving himself from that *woe* pronounced by the Son of God against him "through whom scandal cometh."—*Airbourne Advocate*.

The French elections, as usual, drove a considerable number of people mad. A Paris correspondent says: "The strangest case I have yet heard of is the following. A clever and well-known Radical architect had a party a couple of evenings ago at his house in the Rue Lecombe. The host had gone out previously muttering some unintelligible words, and his wife was very anxious. But when the guests were assembled and seated he suddenly reappeared in the costume of a gardener with an immense and well-filled watering pot in his hand. "Women are pretty flowers," said he, with a wild look, "they require copious watering." He began with an elegantly dressed lady seated on a sofa, and administered to her on head and shoulders a plentiful shower bath, of which he certainly had more need than his terrified guest. Before the others could escape he continued the operation, going round the room, and being perfectly impartial in his distribution of the ungrateful flood, pouring it on the neck and shoulders of one, on the head of another, and on the lower extremities of a third, and thoroughly inundating silks and ribbons and laces and clignons. When he came to his wife, who began to remonstrate with him he cried out, "Oh! I won't water you; you are not a flower but a weed; it was with difficulty the poor gentleman was put under restraint.