

might enjoy a laugh at his critics, who, when they imagined they were castigating him were in truth falling foul of Seneca or Plutarch; but nevertheless in our much smaller way, we make provision for adverse criticism. We have no hesitation, therefore, in informing our monitor that it was not directly from the report of Professor Pearson we gained the information made use of in our note to which he takes exception. A formal examination of the document in question would not have appeared under our heading of *Current Topics*, but would have been assigned a place in the columns occupied by our leaders. Our statements were, however, made on unexceptionable authority; namely, that of the Melbourne *Advocate*, who most decidedly has "read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested" the Report of the learned Professor. The *Advocate*, then, quotes the expression of the Professor's dismay made in his report, and we agree with him in considering an average attendance of 46 per cent. as most dismal when viewed in connection with the expenditure found necessary to insure it. The average attendance in other countries, where no such expenditure is made, has nothing whatever to say to the question. The *Advocate*, likewise, supplied us with the data on which we went with regard to the rate of increase. Our contemporary says:—"Professor Pearson estimates the attendance for 1876 at 46.76 in 100, which is an increase of less than 5 per cent. on 1871." That, on his authority, is our gain after 6 years' experience of the free and godless system. And if the matter be inquired into, it will be seen that there is no gain, but a loss; for under the old system the increase in attendance would have been very much larger. As anyone may see for himself, by referring to the reports of the denominational or common school systems, the rate of increase was much larger than Professor Pearson claims for the new system; and in claiming as much as he does he claims by far too much. For one thing, it is not at all clear that he makes any allowance for the children under school age. However, the fact remains—as admitted by a Royal Commission—that the increase in 1876 over 1871 is less than 5 per cent. in the average attendance, and this is the fact the secularists should take to heart. It is one that should bring confusion on those who have been pertinaciously, and not honestly, bolstering up the Act and deceiving the public with regard to it." For the grounds of our "merry-making" against the Truant Inspector we must again turn to the *Advocate*. Our authority was the gentleman who writes in our contemporary's columns under the *nom de plume* of "Tapley," and who generally knows what he is writing about, and very ably expresses it. He says:—"One part of Professor Pearson's report appears to have escaped the attention of Press writers, though it has been heartily laughed at by others who have seen it. In the country schools the Professor gravely suggests that the truant officer, or the head of the police, should be sent for to cane the vulgar little naughty boys." Such, therefore, is the history of our note, and we hope that now our worthy contemporary will absolve us from an intention of telling fibs. We are the more anxious to be re-established in our contemporary's esteem, because we have been so much flattered and confounded by the kindly consideration with which he professes himself inclined to regard us. We know, indeed, that there is a school of interpreters who explain the Scriptural precept of treating your adversaries with kindness, and thereby pouring coals of fire upon their heads, by asserting its meaning to be that, in so treating them, you will be hitting them all the harder; but our contemporary is of no such spirit, his regret at our obstreperousness is genuine, and he regards us with true philanthropy. He reproves us simply for our good, and would sweeten, by his exhortations, our "tone of bitterness." Our transgressions are before us, but we take refuge in the adage "*Homo sum ergo nil humanum a me alienum puto.*" It is natural to man to feel bitter when he is conscious of being bullied and tyrannised over, and bullied and tyrannised over we Catholics are, while Government endeavours to force secularism upon us. Our contemporary tells us, that "in Colonies like these public feeling would not for an instant tolerate children being forced on any consideration to attend particular schools to which their parents had religious and conscientious objections." But is not public feeling at this moment tolerating this very injustice? It is countenancing the Governments of Victoria and New Zealand in their persistent attempt to force Catholic children into the Godless schools that their parents abhor. What security have we that what is now being done indirectly may not, after a little, be attempted directly? We have none but our own resolute determination, and we know it. In conclusion, *apropos* of religious compulsion, would it not be as well to allow history to repeat itself? Why not at once adopt the Spartan plan of rearing children? It was found admirably calculated to produce desirable warriors, and to-day desirable voters appear to be as imperative a *sine qua non*. Do what you will, home influences must always counteract in some degree your best laid plans of education, and, since rigour is to be employed, it would be as well to go the "whole hog" at once. Custom inclines us to think that such a proposal is nonsensical, but, on reflection, we agree that it does not seem so very far-fetched after all. We actually may have such a proposal made in all seriousness, and that, at the rate things are progressing, before many more years have passed away.

OUR contemporary the *Thames Advertiser* enables us to give an illustration of what parents must prepare themselves to endure under

a system of rigorous compulsion in the matter of education. He holds up for the admiration of the public a population of larrikins, whose habitation is somewhere in his neighbourhood. He thus describes them:—"There are numerous lads who swarm up the creeks daily, who not only are not profitably employed, but do much mischief. The Karaka Creek may be instanced. Miners can tell of lads who should be at school being, instead, engaged in boyish pranks, often burning trees which would be useful for firewood to many families whose head is 'down on his luck,' and on more than one occasion have batteries been endangered by these fires. The tramways are frequently much injured by these youthful adventurers in quest of amusement. A sight will frequently meet the eye of the traveller which, in the distance, would remind him of the pictures published in periodicals for the million, and boys in particular, of a gathering of dusky cannibal warriors, after the affray, seated round the fire smoking their pipes, enjoying themselves with the zest of thoughtless savagery. On nearing the group they turn out to be colonial larrikins, each with a black short 'cutty' pipe in his mouth, diligently smoking away the gastric juices of his stomach essential to digestion. It sometimes happens that the group may not be sufficiently endowed with worldly goods to have tobacco and pipes each, so a clubbing of coppers ensues, sufficient tobacco is procured, and a pipe, which is passed round after the manner of the Indian calumet. These young hobble-de-hoys in the evenings may be found clustered at street corners annoying, and occasionally passing indecent remarks upon the passers-by. Their knowledge of the three R's is very limited, if any,—and of the parts of speech, or of the seat of war it is nil. But they are adepts at everything appertaining to larrikinism. Their learning in oaths, curses, and slang is profound."

Our contemporary advocates that the compulsory clauses of the Act should be brought into action in favour of these young gentlemen; and against this we desire to make no objection. But it is alongside of such characters that our paternal Government seeks to drive us to range our innocent children, to keep whom respectable most of us are willing to suffer many inconveniences and deprivations. In their mixed schools they would subject not only our boys, but our girls as well to such companionship. We need not as yet, it is true, submit to this, but we must pay a heavy fine for the privilege of avoiding it. Now, under the system recommended by that enlightened, and we presume elegant, Professor, late of the Ladies' College, Melbourne, let us see what might happen. It might arrive to a man to have one or two delicate and timid little girls, whom it had been his pride and happiness to have had educated by the good sisters at some convent school. A Government examination, however, is established, and the Inspector comes to hold it. This gentleman is persuaded in his inmost heart that his real business is to close private schools, and more especially those of the Catholics. He accordingly sees everything with a jaundiced eye, and his consequential, Jack-in-office, bearing terrifies the children, so that they answer badly. The school is pronounced deficient, and the pure-minded little ones of whom we speak are handed over to the mercies of the Government teachers, now also secularised, and placed check-by-jowl with such ruffians as our contemporary describes. For our own part we should hold that the trial related of William Tell would be preferable to such an ordeal as this, and that, although the man had not been possessed of his unerring aim, and had, in consequence, sent his shaft not through the apple, but through the brain of his child instead. A tyrannous woman, however, is invariably the most ingenious and reckless tyrant, and a man who has spent any time presiding amongst ladies is sure to adopt some of their distinguishing traits. If there must be ladies' colleges, it were better that they should possess "prudes for proctors" and "dowagers for deans;" but, if it be found necessary for a man to assume the part of prude and dowager, let it be understood that he is incapacitated from meddling with sterner metal than that afforded by his fair clients. In the long-run the mixed population of a country will not be found so easy to cow as a class of bread-and-butter misses.

OUR liberal Cardinal and moderate Pope has, then, proved ungrateful to his admirers, and we now await their inevitable howl of execration. We foretold how it would be, and we knew still more than we published. We knew that, before the cardinals entered the conclave, they bound themselves by a solemn oath in the Pauline Chapel, to do nothing that would in any way compromise the Temporal Power, and very certain were we that Pope Leo would not break the oath that Cardinal Pecci had made. We have, therefore, enjoyed a little harmless amusement in reading the predictions and congratulations of many of our contemporaries with respect to His Holiness. Our contemporaries were most anxious to proclaim the death of the ever to be venerated Pius IX: some were idle enough to imagine that with him the Papacy must end, and others imagined that he would be succeeded by a pope of the period. To Catholics both notions were alike ludicrous; they knew that the Papacy can only pass away when the end of all things has arrived, and that no change of disposition can take place in the occupant of the Fisherman's chair. Our contemporaries are now disappointed; by this time they must perceive that one, not more steadfast than Pius IX, and