

What, then, do Catholics ask? Justice! To be put on a footing of equality with their fellow-citizens, to have an equitable share of the public funds granted for the promotion of education, to which they contribute in common with their fellow-citizens, set apart for aiding them to teach their children in their own schools the subjects usually taught in the public schools.

The first resolution was proposed by Mr. Perrin. He said:—My Lord Bishop, Ladies and Gentlemen,—The resolution placed in my hands as the delegate appointed here to represent the Catholics of Nelson, Winton, and Naseby relates to the violence offered to the Catholic conscience by the secular system of education. We are frequently told that this system presents nothing to us with which we may not reasonably agree: but this is manifestly untrue. We Catholics have a firm belief in the existence of God: we are taught by our creed, and we hold our creed as something definite and all-important that our lives are to be regulated in view of the constant presence of God. We are not permitted to thrust it aside as a thing that it may be useful now and then to recognise, but we are bound continually to live in it. We are told to offer to God as a continual prayer, not only set forms of words and appointed modes of action; but every word, every thought, every deed. But how shall we offer to God any action that tends to hide the knowledge of Him from our fellow-creatures. Much more from those whom he has made dependant on us for it—our own children. We should openly mock Him were we to attempt to do so, and blasphemously call upon Him to bless our crying sin. Again, what father or mother is here to-night?—And I rejoice to see so many of our Catholic mothers here, for much more than on the fathers the lot of the children depends on them. It is acknowledged, and there have been many striking examples of its truth, that it depends chiefly on the mother whether or no the child shall grow up a worthy member of society. I am glad, then, to see the mothers come here to protest by their presence against the attempted destruction of their children's faith, and to give a pledge of their determination to uphold it. I congratulate them and propose to them the noble example of those women of Brittany, the most glorious because the most faithful of all the provinces of France, who stood up the other day and warned the men making a like attempt upon their children, that if such an outrage were persisted in they would remember the mother of the Macchabees and rear up a race to resist as warriors the attack of impiety, and as martyrs to endure its utmost rage. What parent, then, is there here to-night who does not carry in his heart a continual prayer for his children. But how can he hope that God will answer his prayer and bless with the sense and protection of His presence those whom he has withdrawn from His presence? How can he pretend to offer to God that which, in fact, so far as in him lay, he has shut out from the sight of God? Or shall he consider that he can please God by presuming to pray that He will accept the gift, that with an impiety more horrible than that of Jephthah, he has at the same time offered to the enemy of God and man—the god of the goddess schools. It is not because this system is the system appointed by the law that Catholics are to find in it all they need. There is a law superior to this law which has provided these school; a law that was recognised by the Heathen themselves, and which they held themselves bound to obey by preference, when there was any discrepancy between what it enjoined, and what was commanded by men. The tragedian Sophocles, for instance, made his heroine Antigone declare that death itself should not force her from this obedience. When she had performed the burial rites for her dead brother, and the anger of the King had overtaken her in consequence, she declared his proclamations had no power to over-ride the unwritten and immoveable laws of the gods; nor should any fear of death induce her to incur the penalty of their breach. They tell us Catholics that our consciences should be less tender than that of this heathen maiden. We who have lived in the full light of the Gospel, and tasted of the promises, should at the bidding of men, without a qualm, renounce our firm convictions, give up the hopes that have hitherto been the lamp of our lives, and taken away from the sight of surely approaching death its terrors. But may we not, one and all, make our boast with King Arthur, "I am not made of so slight elements." The habit of our lives, based on our firm and reasonable faith, are not to be thus easily renounced. We cannot, at their bidding, consent to offer to God our lives defiled and stinking in His nostrils because we have shut out from the knowledge of Him those whom he has especially invited to come to Him. We cannot stifle the prayer, none the less constant because it may be for the most part silent, that continually dwells in our hearts for our little children, because to gain any earthly advantage or to avoid any earthly loss we have, of our own free will, given over those children into the hands of men who know not God but openly deny Him. I beg therefore to propose, (see first resolution).

The second resolution was proposed by Mr. Crofts, one of the delegates appointed by the Catholics of Invercargill. He said: My Lord, rev. clergy, ladies and gentlemen,—We have met to-night to consider one of the most momentous questions that can possibly be agitated by any civilised community. It concerns nothing more nor less than the temporal and eternal welfare of the rising generation. As His Lordship and Mr. Perrin have so very ably stated our case, and as I know there are many other resolutions to be proposed, it is not my intention to detain you for any considerable time. But still, because this is the "affection of my heart," as Paddy says, I don't see that I should be prevented from speaking on the subject. In fact, I can't help doing so.—(Hear, hear.) The resolution that has been placed in my hand, as a delegate from Invercargill, is as follows. (Secrecution 2.) Now I don't think I shall require much eloquence, my Lord, to prove that it is calculated to impair the moral tone of the community.—(Hear, hear.) Unchristian and anti-Christian we know it is, because where the name of the Creator is forbidden to be mentioned in the public schools it must necessarily be so. It appears to me that the so-called philosophers of the present day want to drive God from His own Creation by their puny little efforts.—(Cheers.) They call themselves philosophers, forsooth, and they say, "We will wipe God away from the State, from the family, and from the school,

and we will take care that our youngsters grow up in no such superstition as a belief in God, or the doctrine of future rewards and punishments." Now what is meant by education? I was at a meeting at Invercargill a fortnight ago, which was attended by gentlemen who wanted to have the Bible read in the schools. Some of them spoke in a very gentlemanly and inoffensive tone indeed, but there was one gentleman present who wanted the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, and who struck out in the most pugilistic attitudes, as if he thought the Pope was coming through the ceiling.—(Loud laughter.) Tom Sayers never struck out so nicely.—(renewed laughter.) It reminded me very much of the picture I once saw of some Puritans pulling down a building—one of those sacred ornaments of antiquity; he appeared for all the world like the leader of that mob. (Laughter.) He wanted to make out that we Catholics had no consciences, and this I could not stand at all, at all—(laughter)—so I stepped on to the platform and begged to take the liberty of informing him that he was misrepresenting the Catholics. I believe he represented Riverton or some other outlandish place in Southland. I told him I would prove to him that we had consciences. I acquainted him with the fact that we put our right hands in our breeches-pocket to pay for the system of education we don't like, and then put our left hands into the other pocket to pay for the system we do like.—(Laughter and cheers.) He was awfully indignant at me for telling him that he had no right to usurp the part of the Creator by daing to judge my conscience.—(Hear, hear.) But, again I ask, what is education? Education is the bringing out of the faculties of man. All parties agree with this definition as far as it goes. Whether it is complete or not is another question. There are some who maintain that a man with a healthy constitution, keen senses, lively imagination, passionate feeling, and a well-stored memory, is *ipso facto* an educated man. But I don't think that definition goes far enough. Education is the bringing out of the faculties of man, and enabling him to use those faculties towards a proper end. The end of all is Christ. In the beautiful words of the catechism, we are hereto know and serve God, to see Him hereafter, and enjoy Him for ever.—(Applause.) Now those materialists, of course, would say that this is all superstition. "The superstition that taught Dominic de Gusman and Francis of Assisium how to revel in deeds of evangelic heroism, and stamp their names upon a century—that took Ignatius from the breach of Pampeluna's walls to make him the father of that mighty race, which, if it could boast of Xavier only, would have given Christendom, as it were, a thirteenth apostle—that disciplined the schools of Europe, and still reaps the fruit of its great parent's prayer, that it might never fail to suffer persecution. They tell us that we are priest-ridden. I may in return tell them, as a layman—and a very humble one at that—that if such a deplorable state of things was to occur, and if his Lordship, who presides here to-night, was to so far forget his duty in the matter. I would be one of the very first to give him a quiet hint about it.—(Laughter and Cheers.) Those who say that we are priest-ridden—well, tell them that they are gentlemen, and that's not the truth.—(Laughter and applause.) We have been so used to abuse during the last 300 years that we can stand such a slander as that. Our forefathers have been placed in the position that they have had the pot of porridge in one hand and the Bible in the other, and have had their faith attacked, but they have cried "No; we would rather die poor than reject our beloved faith."—(Loud cheers.) And are we in New Zealand going to allow a few paltry philosophers to usurp to themselves all the intelligence in the world? Why, there is more intellect represented on this platform to-night—and I am not including myself—(laughter)—than in a lot of these petty so-called philosophers put together.—(Applause.) And these fellows, because they have a smattering of law and politics, go in for what is called the Liberal party. Now, what is the difference between the secularists and the Catholics? It is just the same as the difference between a physician and a pastry-cook.—(Laughter.) The physician will prescribe what is proper—though often nasty—for your ailments, and the pastrycook will prescribe what is tasty and what goes down well.—(Renewed laughter.) Well, the secularists will find in time that these tasty things will not agree with them, and they will only be too glad to apply to the old physician at the Vatican to be cured.—(Applause.) The secularists are trying hard to wrest religious education out of your hands. Well, they can't do it.—(Cheers.) They want to chase God from the family, from the school, and from the State. The strife is waxing hotter and hotter every day. I am not a prophet, I am sorry to say, but my opinion is that we are advancing rapidly towards the day when there will be a war between Christianity and Materialism, and Christianity will stand or fall with the dear old Church; and we are not afraid that the Church will fall.—(Loud cheers.) She has stood the blasts of a good many storms, and I think she will get over this one by-and-bye. In the meantime let us all put our shoulders to the wheel and push on the good old cause. The State may make as many laws as it pleases, but it will never get us to give up the religion which our forefathers fought for hundreds of years.—(Applause.) It is a remarkable fact that one of the most conservative Governments in the world—the present English Government—is undertaking a national Catholic University in Ireland at the present moment, and it is no less remarkable that the so-called liberalists of New Zealand are doing the very opposite thing here. I suppose that is because we are at the Antipodes, and do things by the rule of contrary.—(Laughter.) But in England the man at the head of affairs is too clever an historian, and too astute a statesman, to countenance infidelity. England, with all her faults—and she has a great many, as you know—has never yet given up her belief in God—that blessing which was sent her by the Almighty and by St. Augustine, is retained by her up to this time.—(Applause.) That belief is a fulcrum, so to speak, and the moment she gives up the whole State will fall and crumble to atoms. The greatest lights of the universe, ancient as well as modern, have been, as we know, the champions of religion. Shall we Catholics, then, consent to put up with the present state of things any longer? I don't think we ought to do so, and, therefore, trust that we shall all lend our utmost aid in securing our rights and privileges. Ever remember the trials and persecutions of your forefathers who reduced to the most abject state of