

national." "From what I have said, you will understand that our elementary schools, if Catholic, have Catholic books and Catholic teachers; if Protestant, their books and teachers are Protestant." The following extract from a speech made by Mr. Gregory in the House of Commons on May 15, 1866, was also read. "Some of the normal colleges are for Protestants, some for Roman Catholics; but while all are under civil surveillance so far as testing proficiency goes, the heads are generally ecclesiastic, it having been admitted that these institutions should have a religious character. The result of this system is this—an admirable education pervading the whole community, only two out of every 100 not being able to read, write, and cipher, and a thorough and cordial acceptance of it by every religious denomination." Before the Rev. David Sidey, then, writes his promised letter on secondary education, it might be as well for him to learn a few facts by means of which to qualify his fancies. They certainly need some kind of an improvement.

### THE VICEROY IN THE NORTH.

(Dublin Freeman, June 28.)

THE Viceregal visit to Belfast terminated on Friday with the ceremony of knighting the Mayor. Sir David Taylor's fellow-townsmen will readily join in congratulating him upon the well-merited dignity. He is personally very popular, and both as a merchant and a magistrate has won a high place in the Northern capital. It is no fault of Sir David's that he is the head and guide of a Corporate body which embodies and perpetuates that purely sectarian spirit which is the bane of social health in Belfast and the Northern province. As Mayor of Belfast, Sir David Taylor presides over the deliberations of a Town Council whose sign might reflect the old Bandon inscription—

"Turk, Jew, or Atheist

May enter here, but not a Papist."

We hear a good deal of the rapid strides of civilisation in Belfast, but in the resolute combination of the party with which Sir David Taylor is allied to exclude from the Council Chamber a single representative of the seventy or eighty thousand Catholics of Belfast there is a striking evidence of the tenacity with which the dominant party clings to the mere narrow-mindedness and bigotry of unenlightened primitive states. It is hardly Sir David Taylor's fault that he is the official figure-head of the exclusive faction, but it is difficult to allude to the head without taking cognisance of the body. Earl Spencer on Friday utilised very fully the few hours of the forenoon which he had in Belfast. Several addresses were presented to him at Ormiston, to which he made brief replies, and, accompanied by the Countess, he spent some time in the showyard of the North East Agricultural Society. It was observed that the Viceregal party were better received than on the previous day, and that the display of flags and street decorations was much more general. This is possibly due to the "Rule Britannia" spirit of the speech which his Excellency delivered at the banquet on Wednesday night, and to his civil, if cold, acknowledgment of the written rhapsodies of Lord Arthur Hill and Mr. Cashier Cobain on Thursday. On the whole, as far as we can see, the Lord Lieutenant has no reason to be dissatisfied with his trip to the North. It is to his credit that he was not deterred from the visit by the windbags of Sandy-row, and the sequel has shown him how inflated and utterly contemptible they are. The lesson is a useful one for future guidance. Although the addresses presented to His Excellency yesterday were from purely religious bodies, it will be noticed that their language for the most part was not of the mildest and most subdued character. The Rev. Mr. Kaue himself could scarcely command a more offensive vocabulary than that of the rev. gentleman who read the felicitations of the Presbyterian College and of the Belfast Presbytery. Earl Spencer may not have meant to utter a gentle hint at the peculiar style in which Northern religious bodies express their admiration for law and order, but his allusion in his addresses to "immoderate language" as a thing to be avoided might be so construed. Before taking his departure Earl Spencer expressed to the Mayor the sincere satisfaction and pleasure which the Viceregal party had derived from the visit.

The recent death of the Rev. Father Ratisbonne has created a new interest in his extraordinary conversion, and probably a great many people have been hearing of it now for the first time. By mistake the name Theodore was printed for Alphonse Marie in announcing the event in the *Ave Maria*; but our readers were aware that Father Theodore had already been dead some months. These two brothers, both of whom had become apostles after abjuring Judaism, were united in such close friendship that it seems as if death itself could not keep them long apart. Father Theodore was the founder of the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Zion, and of the Arch-confraternity of Christian Mothers. Father Alphonse, who co-operated in the works of his brother, directed the Community of Religious of Zion, established in that city. His sudden and miraculous conversion took place, as we stated, in Rome, at the beginning of the year 1842. At that time he thought of Christianity only to reject it with contempt, mingled with hatred. One day, as he was waiting in the Church of S. Andrea delle Frate for his friend the Baron de Bussière, who had gone into the sacristy to make arrangements for a funeral, he felt impelled to enter the Chapel of St. Michael the Archangel, where a wonderful grace awaited him. The Blessed Virgin appeared to him, surrounded by such brightness and glory that he fell upon his knees, being as it were crushed by an irresistible hand, whilst at the same time his soul was so fully enlightened that he "understood all." This conversion made such a stir that the Holy See thought proper to take notice of it, and ordered the event to be canonically examined. After a conscientious investigation, Cardinal Patrizi, June 3, 1842, declared that there was full evidence of "a true and great miracle wrought by God, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin."—*Ave Maria*.

## Correspondence.

[We are not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents.]

### A MATTER OF OPINION.

TO THE EDITOR N.Z. TABLET.

SIR,—You say the education question is the most important. This I deny. Let us first tax the land, and then, when there is an overflowing national treasury, it may be easy to get money grants to our schools. If grants were a fact to-morrow, where would the money come from? Catholics should think of this, and first, as Sir George Grey says, make sure of the unearned increment. It is foolishness to make the education question the alpha and the omega of a Catholic. Let us fight for justice for all, and in that will we get our own reward.—I am, etc.,

ARTHUR O'CONNOR.

Christchurch, August 8, 1884.

[Nevertheless, the education question is the alpha and omega for Catholics. There is, however, a "Catholic" here and there who casts in his lot with the ruck whose alpha and omega, for this world and the next, is, as Carlyle says, the "attainability of hog-wash."—We wish such a "Catholic" joy of his pursuit, and bid him welcome to his opinions.—ED. N.Z. TABLET.]

### CHILD-SLAVERY IN NEW YORK CITY.

(From John Swinton's Paper.)

IN close proximity to the St. John's Park Depot, where long lines of freight cars or loaded trucks are constantly in motion—in a street leading down to the Hudson River, and where numberless families live in three and four-story houses—there is a six-storey brick building, with windows which would do credit to a prison or fortress, but are too small for any building in which human beings are supposed to need light and air. Between the windows, and running around the front and one side of the building, is painted: "Manufacturers of the Peerless Tin Tank, Japanned Tin Ware. Ginna and Co." The whirr and buzz and hum of machinery came through the open windows this bright May day, but no human being was visible.

I had often heard that boys were engaged in this slaughter-house on dangerous work, and thought I might be able to see for myself. The front door was shut, and as I entered I heard a bell ring somewhere inside.

No getting beyond the entrance here. A strong wooden fence surrounded three sides of the inclosure, and on the other was a door leading into an office.

Hanging up alongside of this door was a framed and glazed copy of "Rules and regulations to be observed by the employees." No one putting in an appearance, I conned these rules, and discovered that every one had to be inside the building when the whistle blew at 7 a.m.; that a half-hour's grace would be allowed at 12 o'clock, and that at 12.30 the whistle would again blow, when every one must be on hand, and that 5.30 was closing time; also that any one not on hand on Monday morning or the day after a holiday would forfeit his situation; and also that no one was permitted to leave the building during working hours without permission from the superintendent.

While reading this interesting document a billious-looking man of about thirty-five came out, and to him I expressed my desire to visit the factory.

"We do not allow visitors," said he. "It is against our rules."

"Why?" I asked.

"We don't want anyone to know our business."

"Did you ever have a Health Inspector around here?"

"Never did."

"Now, I am engaged in obtaining statistics on child labour in this city, and for that purpose insist on going through the factory." With that I produced my authority.

"I don't care. You can't go through without a warrant. I don't care what you are, you can't go through."

"You are the—?"

"Superintendent."

Accosting a puny, pale lad of about fifteen, who was standing outside, I asked him if he worked in this slave-pen.

"I don't now. I left there to-day. I was in the soldering room. But there are little bits of fellows on the machines. Wait a little and you'll see them. They only make about two and a half a week and sometimes they're fined nearly all their wages. They have to pay for everything they spoil, and sometimes they don't have much to draw on Monday. Accidents? Yes, plenty of them. Sometimes a boy gets his thumb or finger taken off; sometimes his arm smashed. Oh, they have to be careful, you bet. They're always waiting boys, but they don't stay long."

Just then the whistle announced quitting-time, and men, boys, and girls came trooping out—the youngsters in greater proportion. Some of them did not seem to be twelve years of age—ragged, most of them. One of them without shoes or stockings. Poor little chaps! many of them not yet in their teens, whose lives seemed to be cast in the hardest of places. The wear and tear of life had begun early with them, and it did not seem strange to me that they were dwarfed in body. As they came out they were opening their envelopes and counting the proceeds of their sixty hours' work. The faces were a study for an artist, dissatisfaction and disappointment prevailed. A bond of sympathy existed between the little fellows as they compared notes; and as they moved slowly away, I felt a curse rising in my heart on a system which doomed little children to such a life.