

## W. H. A. T. N. E. X. T. ?



Is there any real desire for economy on the part of our Legislature. No doubt there are certain members of it who are indeed anxious to lighten the burdens of the people; but they, unfortunately, are in a very small minority. Notwithstanding the great noise that is made in the beginning of each session of Parliament on this head, it invariably happens that when any measure having economy in view is proposed it is at once and ignominiously rejected. There have been already two cases in point during the present session. A clause was introduced into Mr. STREWARD'S Bill in the Council to raise the school age a little so as to render our Education system a little reasonable, and gave the taxpayers an unnecessary expenditure on infants, for whose education they are paying about one hundred thousand pounds a year, although these are not of an age to profit by this expenditure, which is, therefore, both foolish and wicked. But this rational proposal has been rejected by the House of Representatives on the plea that any reduction in the education vote would have the effect of closing some country schools. What is this but a confession that the money, £100,000, is spent, not on the education of those for whom it is necessary, but for the purpose of keeping up unnecessary schools. The money, then, is voted on false pretences. Children of five years of age, are incapable of profiting by the education given in the public schools, and yet money is voted in order that a colour may be given to what is in reality unjust. This is a fraudulent proceeding, a dishonest pretence. Besides is it really true? In point of fact, it may be asked, do infants of five years of age frequent these country schools? The Minister of Education affirmed that if the school age were raised as proposed, the effect would be that schools in sparsely-peopled districts should be closed. If so, then, we must conclude that in many places the school returns cannot be correct. Sparsely-peopled districts are not the localities where infants of five years of age are found in public schools. Reason, common sense, and experience show that infants do not and cannot attend public schools in such districts. We refuse, therefore, to accept the plea, and we hold that the Minister of Education has been imposed upon by some people who have a special object to serve. But it is in this case as in all others, the very men who talk most loudly in favour of economy in the abstract, are the very first to resist it in practice. Again, an hon. Member proposed after the rejection of the Council's amendment, to lessen the education vote by £50,000. This, however, would not be listened to, and was rejected by an overwhelming majority. So much for the sincerity of Parliament in the matter of economy. Here in this particular instance one hundred thousand pounds are absolutely thrown away, wantonly squandered. The saving of this amount would not impair in the least the efficiency of our godless system of education; but it would imperil the prestige and popularity of certain individuals and give an apparent victory to a certain extent to many who are thoroughly dissatisfied with the present system of education, and consequently Parliament would not listen to it, although additional taxation in these depressed times is the inevitable consequence.

## SOME SCHOOL BOOKS.

In the list of books recommended to be used in public schools by the Education Department, we find the "Royal History of England." This department wishes all children to attend the public schools; and, indeed, under certain circumstances, can compel attendance. One would expect, under such circumstances, that care would be taken to recommend only such books as all could read without offence, and without imbibing false notions on religion and history. Such, however, is not the case, as we can easily show. To-day we mean to confine ourselves in our criticism of our public school books to the "Royal History of England" so strongly recommended, and which, of course, such unfortunate Catholic children as attend some public schools must both read and study. In page 204, children are told, Catholics as well as others, the following:—"The Reformation—whence the greatest changes of modern times have sprung—was now in progress. The Church of St. PETER had for many years been rising on the banks of the Tiber. To raise funds for the building, LEO X. had sent out monks to sell indulgences—a mode of procuring money

invented by URBAN II., in the days of the Crusades." In this passage there are two lies, the first is that LEO the X. sent monks to sell indulgences; the second is that URBAN II. invented indulgences. In page 428 we read these words:—"In 1791, the society of United Irishmen, formed by Roman Catholics for the same purposes, agitated the separation of Ireland from the British Empire." This is not a fact. Wolfe Tone, a Protestant, was the founder of the United Irishmen, and almost all the leaders, from first to last, were Protestants. In page 32, under the heading "Contemporary Foreign Events," we read:—"68 A.D.—The Apostle PAUL was beheaded at Rome by the order of NERO." Why has not the name of St. PETER been mentioned? He was a more important person than PAUL, and he was put to death at the same time and in the same city as St. PAUL. But it would not suit our education authorities to let children know that such a person as St. PETER ever existed. The suppression of the fact of his martyrdom has been designed for a purpose which is obvious. St. PAUL is to be exalted above the Prince of the Apostles, that the authority of the Roman Pontiff may be concealed from Catholic and all other children. These three specimens of the way in which our school histories have been composed will suffice for to-day. On considering them, Catholics will understand the nature of the teaching prepared for children in the schools which they are compelled to maintain in this country. And it will be manifest that a great wrong is done, and a great tyranny exercised, in compelling them to pay for teaching the rising generation falsehoods about their religion and the country from which the vast majority of them have come. We may say, in conclusion, that the tone of this book, the "Royal History of England," is, in addition to its downright falsehoods, anti-Catholic. Behold the nature of the much-belauded secular system under which we are groaning.

We are glad to learn that a branch of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul for women has been founded in Dunedin. The object of the Society is the relief of the poor, and it has always been found to work most successfully wherever it has been established. The active members meet once a week to sew for the benefit of those who are in need of clothes, and their duty is also to attend to the wants of persons recommended by honorary members, to visit the poor in their own particular districts, and the sick at the hospital. It is however, forbidden by the rules that anyone shall neglect her own household in order to fulfil these duties. The Society does not limit its attentions to members of the Catholic Church, but irrespective of creed or denomination embraces in its sphere people of every form of belief, and it is also open to non-Catholics to become honorary members. The meetings of the active members commence by a prayer, and one of the Society's chief ends is the promotion of piety, it also provides the means of gaining numerous indulgences. The ladies who have joined the Dunedin branch of the Society, as active members, so far, are as follows:—President, Mrs. Fergusson; Secretary, Mrs. Callan; Treasurer, Miss Horan; Librarian, Miss Hutcheson; Wardrobe keeper, Mrs. Horan assisted by Miss D. Horan; Buyer of goods, Miss McKay assisted by Mrs. Callan; Mrs. C. Chapman, Miss Ratislau, Miss D. Horan. The Rev. Father Walsh has undertaken the duties of Spiritual Director. The first of the weekly sewing-meetings has been held and the result is that already five persons have been supplied with warm clothing. Copies of the rules, or any other information desired may be obtained on application to Mrs. Fergusson, Dowling street, or Mrs. Callan, Mornington. We are convinced that the establishment of this Society will be hailed by all our Dunedin readers with pleasure as filling a notable want, and that in stating the fact of this establishment we have done all that is needed to ensure to it the warm support of every member at least of the Catholic community. We may add that some Protestant ladies have also generously entered their names as honorary members. In conclusion, let us hope that the Catholic women of Dunedin have inaugurated a work that will be speedily taken up also by the Catholic men. The successful work of both branches of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul among us would be productive of good untold, and is an object that should be pursued with the utmost vigour and perseverance.

THE first football match of St. Patrick's College, Wellington, was played on Saturday, against the "Rivals" football club, on the ground of the latter, in Hobson street, and resulted in a victory for the College by 13 points (1 goal and 4 tries) to nil. W. and J. Redwood, Saunders and McIlroy, secured the tries, whilst G. Redwood, McMahon and Diamond, distinguished themselves throughout the game, the latter kicking a goal at a very difficult angle. Forham, Parsons and Tripe, did good work for the defeated. Next Saturday, the 22nd, St. Patrick's will try conclusions with the Wellington College 2nd fifteen at Newton Park.

THE House of Representatives have thrown out the clause passed by the Legislative Council, and amending the Education Act so as to