

money. We are not experts enough to pronounce an opinion on the Admiral's contention. But his statements seem not only plausible but really well founded, and his position in the Navy gives his views great authority. The meeting endorsed his views in every way, and passed strongly worded resolutions deprecating any great future expenditure on warlike preparations, and sanctioning the opinion that with the aid of a few not very expensive pieces of ordnance and armed cruisers on the Coast, our volunteers are amply sufficient to protect us from any assault likely to be made by an enemy, even though that enemy might be a nation as powerful as Russia. We hope these resolutions do not embody too sanguine a view of the situation. But we can pronounce no opinion, and we trust that the Government will well weigh authorities of all sorts before finally committing themselves either to the views expressed by the resolutions or to the large expenditure contemplated. There can be no doubt that great reliance can be placed on the patriotism and courage of the Volunteers, and other citizens of New Zealand, but the question is, can mere Volunteers be expected to be able to cope with well trained and seasoned regular troops? If they can, it seems absurd not to trust the defence of nations to Volunteers instead of standing armies. However, as we are not qualified to pronounce an opinion on this subject and must leave it to be discussed by experts, we shall go on to the consideration of another phase of this meeting. We thought we discovered in the tone of some, at least, of the speakers a tendency to edge in a word or two in the direction of protection to native industry, and certainly there was an unanimous expression of conviction that economy should be the guiding star of all. As to protection we can only say, this is a much vexed question and that it has not saved the nations which have adopted it from the prevailing dullness. No nation has gone in for this policy more thoroughly than the United States, and no nation is at the present moment duller than they are. Here our depression is caused chiefly if not entirely by low prices for agricultural produce arising from competition, the increased value of gold consequent on its decreased production, and uncertainty produced by the unsettled state of the silver currency. And the depression proceeding from these causes has been immensely aggravated by our enormous expenditure during the last seven years on education. The country has been borrowing money in hundreds of thousands of pounds to build unnecessary school halls for infants in the large centres of population and to provide educational advantages for the children of well-to-do people whilst the consolidated fund has been unduly burdened with an expenditure that should have been borne by parents instead of by the country. The policy of New Zealand has been altogether the reverse of what it should have been. Free education has been provided, and largely too, out of borrowed money, for all who can avail themselves of it, and the all are vastly the greater number, whilst in in many instances the parents of these children find it difficult to provide food for them. If the Government had permitted well-to-do people to discharge their own obligations to their children, and spent the money now wasted on them, in providing reproductive work for the unemployed, the depression should not have been much felt, nor should there have been either the exodus of tradesmen and others which we have all witnessed with so much regret, nor the agonising distress experienced by not a few families. It would be a good thing if expenditure of borrowed money could be stopped, but can it, without immensely aggravating the present distress, or is it wise to leave any of the works now in progress unfinished? And yet what is to be done? We really do not see that anything else than the reduction of the education expenditure is possible. Hundreds of thousands of pounds can be saved annually, without lessening the attendance at schools by a single child. The country is not called upon, nor is anyone, to provide free education for the children of people who are well able to pay themselves for their education. We say, then, let these well-to-do people pay for their children's schooling, and let the State pay for children whose parents have not the means of paying for them. It is monstrous that the entire community should be compelled to borrow money at high interest to educate the children of traders, merchants, professional men, and strong farmers, or that all the unmarried people of the country should be compelled to pay for the free education of members of rich and well-to-do families. This is the sort of thing that heaps up interest, adds debt to debt, and renders the Government unable to give employment to willing hands on reproductive work. We know we shall be charged with wishing to

patronise ignorance, but we regard such a charge with the contempt it deserves. We are too conscious of our real desire to see the people educated, and have been too long habituated to make large sacrifices in order to promote the education of the poor and helpless, to be much troubled by the calumnies of the prejudiced, the ignorant, and the interested. But we affirm that those who wish indeed to see the people properly educated will endeavour to see them brought up in self-reliance, in Christianity, and under a system that breathes justice—not injustice and tyranny—in all its features.

The Bishop of Dunedin will lay the foundation stone on Sunday next the 13th inst., of a church to be erected at Rangiora.

Our Evangelical friends, we perceive,—continue to be troubled, as they have been since Calvin's time, at their own invention concerning the false relics to which Catholics pay divine worship.—Just at present, however, it might almost seem as if the Evangelical house itself required to be set in order, and the time of its occupants might find full employment in doing so.—They occupy themselves with silly and monstrous stories about relics and their uses, while their feticch, the Authorised Version, is radically deranged and contains false passages, according to high Protestant authority, than even more according to Calvin the father of this particular branch of lying, there are false relics in the world—and yet they continue to preach from this discredited version, and to give it all their accustomed veneration, believing themselves damned if they depart from a word it contains, as if its most important passages and those most quoted in establishing what they regard as their vital doctrines—had not suffered a radical and authoritative change.—Hardly a trace, for example, of the Messiah is to be found in the revised version of the Old Testament, and the prophecies hitherto taken as referring to him have now a totally different meaning.

The failure of the Bill for the abolition of the Gold Duty, may be regarded as one of the chief misfortunes of the session.—This duty is a tax that falls heavily on one of the most deserving and useful classes of our colonists and weights an industry in which the welfare of the Colony is closely involved. An ugly feature, moreover, in the failure of this Bill was that pointed out by Mr. Pyke—to wit that it was owing to the opposition of the Northern members.—The disregard of all but mere local interests thus shown is very suggestive, and may well have a part in shaping the future policy of the South.

In opposing Captain Russell's proposal for the reduction of the public works estimates, Mr. Moss makes a strong point of the necessity that under such circumstances would arise for checking the expenditure on school-buildings.—But, as the need for reduction arises altogether from the lavish expenditure on education, the force of the Hon. Member's argument may, perhaps, be doubted without extravagance, and by unprejudiced people.—An allusion, however, to the possibility of any curtailment of the sums devoted to providing instruction and accommodation for the children of well-to-do people at the public expense cannot be without its effect in the present temper of the community, and must tend to defeat any proposal against which it is urged. Secularism must be supported even if the Colony should starve in doing so.—But if men suffer in an attempt to destroy the belief in God what can be more just?

A MEETING of aspirants to the women's branch of the Sodality of the Sacred Heart will be held this (Friday) evening in St. Joseph's schoolroom, Dunedin, on the conclusion of the Rosary in the church.

WE clip the following from the *Nation* of July 18th.—The most outspoken and thorough-going deliverance on the Home Rule question that has yet come from any English politician of Ministerial rank is, undoubtedly, that of Mr. Herbert Gladstone at Leeds on Tuesday night. Mr. Gladstone, having made some remarks on the abandonment of coercion by the Tories, spoke the following remarkable words:—"They (the Liberals) had refused a great number of the measures of Mr. Parnell because they were loyal to classes in Ireland whom they believed were threatened—whom they were weak enough to believe were loyal and straightforward men (hear, hear). These men had betrayed them. He asked them, then, who was there in Ireland to fight for, and whom were they to stand up for against the national party? There was no one in Ireland whom they might stand up for, as his point was that, for good or for evil, Mr. Parnell represented the Irish people. Let them end, then, the mockery of what was called constitutional government in Ireland, and let them form a system of government which was based entirely upon popular wishes and on a popular sentiment (loud cheers). His experience of what twenty or thirty determined Irishmen could do in the House of Commons showed him that eighty could make our present system of government practically unworkable. If that system did become unworkable, it became so to the harm of the British Empire (cheers). This must be taken into consideration; and they must either satisfy the reasonable demand of the Irish people or must eject them from the House and govern the