

Is it fair to the community that these people's children should be receiving their education, at the public expense? It is right, indeed, that children whose parents have no work, or no present means of paying school fees should have free education. But the State is not called upon to provide free schools for the children of well-to-do people. If, then, well-to-do people would only pay as they should, for the education of their children, at least one half of the money now annually spent on education could be saved to the State, and thus £250,000 per annum could be set free for the realization of Sir Julius Vogel's policy. In this event six millions sterling could be borrowed for public works without the imposition of a single shilling of additional taxation. And would not this do much for the welfare and progress of the Colony. The only answer that can be given to this is that education would suffer; this, however, is not a valid answer. For if well-to-do people will not discharge their duty to their children, they should be compelled to do it, and taught that they must not any longer look to their fellow citizens, many of whom are in a worse position than themselves, to pay largely towards the free education of their children. Throughout the English-speaking world, Catholics, the poorest portion of the community, provide excellent schools for their own children, and notwithstanding the persistent assertions to the contrary, their schools are more efficient than the schools supported and even pampered by the Government. The results of competitive examinations everywhere prove this. In Ireland, for example, boys and girls from the unendowed Catholic schools and colleges carry off sixty per cent. of all prizes, and this shows the absurdity of the system which expends the entire education resources of the Government on its own pampered schools. Again, the other day in New South Wales, schools of all sorts and denominations sent up children to be examined for the civil service; of these only eight passed, and of these eight, six were the pupils of St. Mary's schools, Sydney, conducted by the Sisters of Charity. Here purely denominational schools, not only unaided by Government, but actually discouraged by Government, have beaten in open competition, all the schools endowed and subsidised by Government. What, then, is the meaning of squandering such vast sums of public money to no purpose on schools for the children of well-to-do people, and at the same time allowing people to perish for want of employment?—employment which this wasted money could so easily provide. We sincerely hope that our fellow citizens will cast away the veil of prejudice, and open their eyes to a common-sense view of the situation.

APROPOS of St. Mary's Industrial Schools at Nelson, we may reasonably complain that the Government resolutely refuse to sanction the reception there of orphan children from other parts of the Colony, the reply being that they are intended for the Province of Nelson alone. Application has been made to them several times—at least from Dunedin, as we are in a position to know—and, although the passages of the children would have been paid, the refusal was peremptory. The unfairness of such a method of proceeding is manifest, and all the more so as Ministers have rejected proposals for the establishment of similar institutions elsewhere. Were any encouragement held out that the Government grant would be given, there is no doubt but that advantage would be taken of it to make provision for the Catholic orphans in other parts of the Colony also. It would certainly be done in the diocese of Dunedin.

PRESSURE on our space obliges us to hold over correspondence and other matters.

MESSRS. MILLS, DICK AND CO.'s Almanac and Directory for 1886 is now issued, and is as usual a most useful and comprehensive work. It will be found to contain all the information—given by works of the kind—which can possibly be required.

THE gentleman who is engaged in disposing of tickets for the art-union, in connection with St. Mary's Industrial Schools, Nelson, will collect the blocks of tickets sold on Monday. He leaves for Oamaru at the beginning of next week.

THE last meeting of the Dunedin Catholic Literary Society was held on the 4th inst., Mr. Charles Columb occupying the chair. Mr. E. Eager gave a recitation; and Mr. Carolin a paper on "The Life of Father Mathew." The paper was a very good and interesting one, and a marked improvement on Mr. Carolin's former efforts. It was written in a racy style, and was replete with information and well told anecdotes about the great apostle of temperance, and was warmly praised by the critics. The next meeting will be held this evening.

THE addresses presented to the Most Rev. Dr. Moran, on Tuesday, were very prettily got up. That of the laity was printed in blue ink on white satin, backed with red silk and trimmed with silver fringe. That of the Christian Brothers' boys was printed on a handsomely illuminated card and contained in a gilt frame, and that of the girls of the Dominican Convent Schools had been illuminated with great taste and skill by one of the nuns. We give these particulars as they were inadvertently omitted from our report.

The annual exhibition of needle work will take place at the Dominican Convent High School, Dunedin, on Tuesday at 3 p.m. The attendance of visitors is invited.

The annual fete of the H.A.C.B.S., will be held at Tahuna Park Musselburgh, on Boxing day. A liberal programme has been provided, and everything will be done to secure the amusement and comfort of people visiting the sports.

ST. PATRICK'S COLLEGE, WELLINGTON.

FIRST DISTRIBUTION OF PRIZES.

THE large study of St. Patrick's College was filled to its utmost capacity on the occasion of the first distribution of prizes to the students of this scholastic institution who had been successful in carrying off the honours for the past half-year. The proceedings attendant on the breaking up for the Christmas vacation were highly interesting. The holidays commenced thus early this term in consequence of the work having gone on uninterruptedly since June last, and therefore it will be conceded that both the masters as well as the boys have thoroughly earned their relaxation. The attendance must have proved highly gratifying to Dr. Watters, the rector of the College, and the various professors who are associated with him. There must have been upwards of 200 ladies and gentlemen present, all of whom were evidently interested in the proceedings, and who expressed their appreciation of the efforts of the pupils to entertain them. The hall had been tastefully decorated with ferns and flowers, and in front of the stage was the word "Welcome" in large letters. The chair was taken by the Very Rev. Father M'Namara, administrator of the diocese, and on his right and left were seated the following clergymen:—Rev. Dr. Watters, S.M., Rector of St. Patrick's College, Rev. P. Kerrigan, S.M., Rev. T. Devoy, S.M., Rev. E. McKenna, Rev. J.J. Moore, Rev. N. Carolan, S.M., Rev. A. Braxmeier S.M., Rev. Wm. Goggan S.M.

Most of the leading members of the Catholic community residing in Wellington were present, including the Hon. Dr. Grace, M.L.C., Dr. Cahill, and Mr. J. C. Johnson, M.H.R. The proceedings commenced with an entertainment given by the boys, consisting of songs, glees, instrumental solos, and duets. The following is the programme of the several items performed:—Glee, "Canadian Boat Song," College Choir; recitation, "The Battle of the League," Master Stanislaus Mahony; violin solo, with piano accompaniment, "Home, Sweet Home," Master John M'Ilroy; song, "The Powder Monkey," Master Stanislaus Mahony; solo (piano), Rondo alla Turca (sonata in A), Master Joseph Kearsley; recitation, "Pillar Towers of Ireland," Master John Sheridan; duet (cornet), "Music and her Sister Song," Masters Stanislaus Mahony and William Wixey; glee, "See our Oars with Feathered Spray," College Choir; duet (piano), "Birthday March," Masters James Kennedy and Joseph Kearsley; recitation, "Charge of the six Hundred," Master James B. Stead; solo (cornet), "Va pensiero sull' al dorate," Master Stanislaus Mahony; violin solo, with piano accompaniment, "Hope told a Flattering Tale," Master John M'Ilroy; song, "Dear Little Shamrock," Master Roger Kett; duet (piano), "Marche aux Flambeaux," Masters Francis Bedwood and Francis Holley; recitation, "The Fall of Poland," Master John Sheridan; song, "The Old Brigade," Master Charles Diamond; quartet, "Students' Parting Song," Masters Roger Kett, Clement Lee, Francis Holley, and Stanislaus Mahony. The programme was gone through with precision and vigour that augur well for future efforts in music and declamation, and round after round of applause greeted each piece. The effect of the entertainment was considerably heightened by the graceful ferns and rich festoons of flowers and evergreens that fell in rich clusters from every vantage point.

At the conclusion of the students' parting song, the Rev. Dr. Watters, S.M., Rector of St. Patrick's College, rose and addressed the boys. He said as the evening in every sense belonged to the lads, it would be ungracious and unfair for him to impose a long oration. He could not refrain, however, from congratulating them and their friends on their having arrived at the termination of the academical year. They were now present at the end of their first term to receive their well-earned laurels for the past half-year. He used the term "well-earned laurels" out of no idle flattery, for both himself and his colleagues had found that the youth of the colony possessed a healthy and wholesome rivalry, and a determination to succeed in their studies. (Cheers.) He bore willing tribute to the zeal, industry and energy, that so far in the main distinguished the students. (Cheers.) Prizes in four of the subjects in the curriculum had been presented, the first by the Rev. Father M'Namara for good conduct, the second by Father Kerrigan, who had given prizes for proficiency in Christian doctrine, the third by Father McKenna for mathematics, and the fourth by Father Moore for science. To the first prizes they attached especial importance, because they desired above all things to turn out Christians and Christian gentlemen from St. Patrick's College. (Cheers.) Their first duty was to know God and to serve Him. How could the rising generation perform their duty towards God unless they learned, how could they learn unless they were taught? On occasions like the present, there was invariably a little shade to mar the pleasure, and so it was that evening, the absence of the Bishop being a source of regret to them all. However, he trusted ere long the Right Reverend Prelate would return to