

fluence. The battle has been fought and won. We do not deny that the victory bears heavily upon us in a pecuniary point of view. We have counted the cost and pay it. It is unjust that we should be doubly taxed and burdened, to support our own schools and schools to which we conscientiously and consistently object. Yet we submit to the injustice—galling as it is—rather than endanger the faith and morality of our children.

But the injustice inflicted on the Catholic community is all the more wanton and oppressive, because it requires no extraordinary wisdom or sagacity on the part of any Government to devise a system which would do justice to all and injure none. Several countries have adopted a plan which substantially produces these happy results. Belgium has adopted it, so has the Austro-Hungarian Empire, so has the Dominion of Canada, so has England though with undue favour to secularism. In these various nations there are indeed differences of administrative detail, regarding public school funds, but they do not affect the general principle, which is one of impartiality and non-interference on the part of the State and its officials with the religious preferences and rights of parents; and the appropriation from the State funds to schools of every denomination, and to purely secular schools for such as prefer them, is made on a fair and equitable basis. The plan alluded to is this: From a common public school fund into which all public school taxes are paid, equal *pro rata* allocations are made to all public schools, according to their respective number of pupils, and certain standards of proficiency attained by them in their respective grades. The allotments are made irrespective of creed, whether the schools be Catholic, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodist, Lutheran, or entirely undenominational and purely secular. Official examiners and inspectors are appointed to examine the candidates for teachership in those schools, without regard to their religious tenets. The examinations refer to purely secular branches of knowledge, and certificates of competency are given or withheld, according to the results of examination. Under this system, impartially carried out, justice is done to the rights and preferences of parents of various religious beliefs, and to those who have no religious belief. Catholics can send their children to Catholic schools, Protestants to the several sectarian schools, and thorough-going secularists to purely secular schools. The system has worked well in the different countries which have tried it, and gives general satisfaction. In Belgium, Catholic and Protestant and purely secular schools are aided or supported by appropriations from the public funds, though, strictly speaking, the number of Protestants in Belgium is small, almost the entire people being Catholics or Secularists. In the Austro-Hungarian Empire, where the vast majority of the people are Catholics the preferences of Protestants are carefully respected, and Protestant schools are supported by the State in which Protestant religious instruction is imparted, as well as schools in which the Catholic religion is taught along with secular knowledge. Similarly in Canada, Catholic and Protestant schools and purely secular ones are aided or supported by public school funds irrespective of their religious or non-religious status. In all these countries the internal management of the schools is entirely free from the interference of Government officials. Such inspectors visit the schools periodically, examine the pupils, or are present at their examination, and note the results. Thus the comparative efficiency of the different schools is accurately known, the Government standard is effectively kept up, a hearty rivalry is established, the freedom of parents is respected, and education all round is the happy gainer for the good of the nation. The only real obstacle to the adoption of this plan is sheer unreasoning prejudice; and, under the influence of such prejudice, non-Catholics are tamely handing over their children to the promotion of Rationalism, and mere Secularism, that is, irreligion. Fearful are the social disasters which they are thus preparing in the near future.

The system is alleged to be unpractical. The conclusive answer to that is the fact of its existence and decided success in several vast and powerful nations which it would be wisdom for New Zealand to imitate. Again it is assailed on account of its pretended expensiveness. To that we answer by emphatically denying that the proposed plan would be more expensive than the present oppressive one, which is an intolerable incubus on the Colony, and which avows expensiveness to be its weakness and the threat of its destruction. Sensible men—when the present secular craze has had its run and ignominiously failed—will marvel at the equal absurdity and impolicy of compelling all, without exception, rich and poor, married and single, people who have no children, Catholics, Protestants, and others, to pay for the free and godless education of the children of well-to-do people. The fact is that the system already prevailing in many countries and acknowledged to be a fair and satisfactory solution of the education difficulty, is by far the cheaper one. This has been proved again and again in this Colony and other places, so that we need not dwell on it here.

But, conceding for mere argument's sake, that it might be a trifle more expensive, would it not be, in a hundred other ways, an inestimable boon to the Colony, solve the vexed education question, promote the union of all members of the community, save our children from the canker of infidelity, and the plague of dishonesty and immorality? If the public school system fails to train up better, not "smarter" citizens, children more *virtuous* as well as more intelligent—and such is the only valid plea for its existence at all—if it fails in this, and we contend that, where it has been best tried, in the United States, it has notoriously and confessedly failed, then the thousands annually expended with reckless lavishness throughout this burdened Colony in maintaining a one-sided, godless system of public schools, are worse than wasted. Nay, we boldly aver that the present State education is simply a machine, most effective and well-devised, for practically de-Christianising our children and rearing a generation of intellectually smart, keen, law-evading, and law-breaking citizens. Surely any system, however expensive, would be preferable to that.

Wherefore, my dear brethren, hearken once more to the unerring voice of the Holy Church exhorting you, with burning zeal and motherly tenderness, to support your schools. Found them everywhere, and generously maintain them; grudge not the moneys which injustice

wrings from you, while you look at the glorious end to be attained, the rescue of your children from the contamination of godlessness. We again remind you that Catholics cannot avail themselves of the Government schools, except in cases of very great necessity, and when—such necessity being supposed—every possible precaution is taken to remove all approximate dangers to faith and morals. We exhort, therefore, most earnestly our priests and people to strain every nerve to establish and maintain efficient Catholic schools, wherever it is possible to do so; and we call upon our clergy to exhibit still greater zeal in this great cause than they have hitherto evinced. We must also keep on urging our just claims, and bringing under the notice of our legislators the self-evident injustice with which we are afflicted, and the impolicy of their present suicidal course. Come what may, we will strive against an injustice by every lawful means; and, by the courageous erection of schools of our own, we will preserve our children from the contagion of secular schools, confident that such a manly course must in the long run command the sympathy and support of every honest man, and finally win us the redress of a crying grievance. But be not content with good public education for your children in Catholic schools; remember that home training is of still more vital importance. The effects of the best school are often marred by a bad or indifferent home. Mothers and fathers, recognise your high duty, your holy vocation, your sublime mission. No teachers, however excellent, can exempt you from your own grave and direct obligations. You may be aided in the tuition of your offspring, but never supplanted. The child's education begins in the mother's arms and at the parent's knee; the impressions of a holy home are deep and lifelong. Parents, and particularly mothers, ought to watch with jealous eye the first opening of the infant mind, to deposit therein the seed of heavenly knowledge, the germs of the purest virtue. Plant the seed of God's word in the virgin soil, and, later on, a more experienced and sacred hand, that of the minister of God, will develop its growth. We exhort parents, in the name of their country, which expects them to rear up, not scourges of society, but honourable, law-abiding citizens; in the name of God who has entrusted them with the care of the tenderest portion of the flock of Christ; in the name of their own and their children's salvation, to provide for them at home a healthy, moral, and religious education. "If anyone have not care of his own, and especially of those of his house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." (Tim. v. 8.) Then they will be consoled in their declining years, and will leave to their posterity, not their name only, but their faith and virtue.

We also exhort you to be generous in your contributions to Peter's Pence, and to the Seminary Fund. Lastly, pray for the conversion of sinners and unbelievers, that all may come to the knowledge of the truth and attain to salvation. Pray also for our Holy Father the Pope and for the liberty and independence of the Church." *The grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and the charity of God, and the communication of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.*"—(Gal. xiii. 13).

† FRANCIS REDWOOD.

Given at Wellington, February 8, 1887.

The following are the regulations for Lent, which we make in virtue of special faculties received from the Holy See:—

- 1st. We grant permission for the use of Flesh Meat at dinner only, on all Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and also on all Saturdays except one, that is the second Saturday, during Lent.
- 2nd. Lard and dripping may be used after the manner of butter, at dinner on all days of fast and abstinence during Lent, and also throughout the year, with the exception of the first and last Wednesdays of Lent, and Good Friday.
- 3rd. White meats—such as butter, milk, cheese, and eggs, are allowed on all day at dinner and collation, with the exception of Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. A little milk is always allowed in tea, coffee, or other beverage.
- 4th. For those who, though not bound to fast, are bound to abstain: The kinds of food which are allowed at their chief meal to those who are bound to fast, are allowed at all times to those who are not so bound.
- 5th. Fish and flesh are not allowed at the same meal during Lent.

There is neither fast nor abstinence on Sundays in Lent.

All who have completed their 21st year are bound to fast and abstain—unless excused by the state of their health or the nature of their employments—according to the regulations stated above; and all who have arrived at the use of reason, though not bound to fast before the completion of their 21st year, are nevertheless bound to abstain from the use of flesh meat on the days appointed—unless exempted for a legitimate cause, of which the respective pastors are to be the judges.

All who have arrived at the years of discretion are bound to go to Communion within Easter time, which, in this Diocese, commences on Ash Wednesday and ends on the octave of the Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul.

The collection for our Holy Father will take place on Good Friday, or on any Sunday shortly afterwards which the pastor may deem more convenient. The collection for the Seminary Fund will be held on Witsunday, or on the Sunday or Sundays following, when there are two or more churches in the district.

The clergy are requested to read this Pastoral from the several altars as soon as possible, and to cause a copy of it to be placed, during Lent, in a conspicuous place in their respective churches and chapels.

† FRANCIS REDWOOD.

"ROUGH ON ITCH."—"Rough on Itch" cures skin humors eruptions, ringworm, tetter, salt rheum, frosted feet, chilblains, itchy ivy poison, barber's itch,