

## NOT OUT OF THE WOOD YET.



UR new Premier has given the country the mind of his Ministry in reference to retrenchment, taxation, and public works; and everyone is now aware of his policy as it appears in words. Until these words, however, are embodied in Acts of Parliament, and actual work done, people will feel themselves in the agonies of doubt. The country has had more than one trial of Major ATKINSON and has heard more than once of cutting down salaries, and of retrenchment generally, but it remembers that the cut-down salaries were very soon restored to the old figure; and they will ask themselves if he now sees his way to retrench in the Civil Service to the extent of £250,000 why did he not adopt this policy during the many years he formerly held office as Premier and Treasurer? This consideration makes people hesitate before they put faith in his new promises or believe in the sincerity of his sudden conversion to the ways of economy. The postponement of the tariff question and his depreciation of haste in a matter of the utmost urgency afford additional reason for hesitation. Real economists and real statesmen are alarmed at the policy which practically leaves the education vote at the figure of last year, that is something more than half a million sterling; for the promise to cut down the vote some sixty thousand pounds only means in reality that the vote of last year shall not be increased this year. This is no relief; it is only abstention from imposing an additional burden. But what is to be thought of the statemanship of a would-be economical Minister, who, in days of depression and when people generally are clamouring for retrenchment, coolly proposes to tax the community to the tune of five hundred thousand pounds in order that a free education may be given to the children of people who have deposits in the banks of the Colony of between eight and ten millions sterling? This is not merely an absurd policy; it is insane. It is nothing short of a scandal that the public should be compelled to pay for the free education of the children of people possessed of such enormous wealth. Why, in the very savings banks there are one million and a half of deposits, so that it is clear that notwithstanding dearth of employment in some quarters and dulness in business, even the working men as a body are not so extremely badly off. And yet it is for a people so favourably circumstanced that the entire community is to be taxed. Why, the real meaning of this taxation is that men well able to pay for the education of their children may be enabled to put more and more money in the savings and other banks of the country. It is this wild, extravagant expenditure of public money that has led to the financial difficulties of the Government, and now threatens to put a stop to all public works. If the Ministry had only wisdom and courage enough to inaugurate a rational and just system of education, under which all should be compelled to educate their children and to pay for such education when able, our financial difficulties would vanish at once. And why not do this? There is really no reason. Catholics manage to educate their own children at their own expense. What is to prevent all others from doing likewise. To be sure there are some who are unable to pay for the education of their children. In such cases, let the Government pay for their education, just as now there are some destitute children for whom the Government provides.—We had written the above when the news arrived that by a majority of two a committee of the House of Representatives had been instructed to enquire whether State aid can be given to denominational schools in large centres of population without injuring the State system of education, and whether it is advisable that the Bible should be read in schools. Certainly this is a step in advance. But we fear much will not come of it. It looks to us as a move on the part of the opponents of Bible-in-schools to defeat the Bible-in-schools people by throwing the red herring of aid to Catholic schools across the path. No better course can be adopted by those who are opposed to Bible-reading in school than to make such reading dependent on aid to denominational schools. Many who would vote for the reading of the Bible will oppose it for fear that by so doing they should in any way even indirectly help Catholics to obtain justice. Something, however, favourable to our claims may result from the labours of this committee, and it will be wise, therefore, to wait before pronouncing a decided opinion. The names of the gentlemen

1 The committee do not afford much encouragement, as

amongst these we find the names of several pronounced opponents of justice to Catholics. We need not particularise them; everyone who has been an attentive reader of the newspapers will be able to put his finger on the names of the Members who have pronounced against aid to Catholic schools either in the House or on the hustings. Here we may observe that Mr. FULTON has brought in a Bill in which there is a clause which makes Bible-reading in public schools compulsory on all who do not object. This is sheer tyranny. What right has Mr. FULTON, or any man, to compel Catholic children, for example, to read his Bible if their parents should forget or neglect, perhaps through inadvertence or ignorance, to forward to the school teacher an objection to Bible-reading in the case of their children? This provision of Mr. FULTON'S Bill is, therefore, intended to invade the right of Catholics, indeed of all parents. If Mr. FULTON wished to act with even the semblance of fairness he would have so worded his Bill as to say that the Bible should be read only by the children of parents who expressed a wish that their children should read it. But no; Mr. FULTON will, if he can, catch all the timid, and unwary, and neglectful, and impose on them the legal obligation of violating their conscience. It is such extravagance and folly as this that defeat the projects of men like Mr. FULTON. But we started with the consideration of the Premier's policy, and behold we have been discussing the education question. This question, however, arises naturally from the consideration of Major ATKINSON'S speech, and is the one which interests us most amongst all the questions raised by him. It enters also into the financial question, which is at present the question of questions with the people of this Colony. We hold, as we have ever held, that all the financial difficulties of the Government have been brought about by the folly and absurd extravagance of our education system, and that it will be in vain to expect amelioration till it is swept off the face of the earth and replaced by a rational and just system, under which the rights of all will be recognised and the discharge of duty on the part of all be insisted on. As to the policy generally of the Government, enough has not been said to enable us to pronounce a decided opinion, and we shall, therefore, await with considerable anxiety further developments. Major ATKINSON'S speech is able; this much may be said without hesitation, but whether his policy will succeed is another thing. We fear, however, the Colony is not yet out of the wood.

ON Tuesday the Feast of All Saint Masses were celebrated in St. Joseph's Cathedral at 7 and 8 a.m. At 11 a.m. Pontifical High Mass took place, the Bishop acting as celebrant with the Rev. Father Vereker as deacon, the Rev. Father Donnelly, sub-deacon, and the Rev. Father Lynch, master of ceremonies. The music was sung by the choir of the Dominican nuns. In the evening there were vespers and benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament, the sermon being preached by the Bishop. On Wednesday, All Souls' Day, solemn offices for the dead and High Mass of *Requiem* were celebrated at 7 a.m., the Bishop being celebrant; the Rev. Fathers Vereker and Donnelly, deacon and subdeacon respectively; the Rev. Father Purton, O.S.B., master of ceremonies; and the Rev. Father Lynch, priest assistant. On both occasions the attendance of the Catholic laity was full, and the number of communicants especially remarkable. Indeed, it is evident that the good works of the Dunedin congregation do not proceed from custom or any inferior motive, but the fruits of a genuine and most practical faith. The true source, for example, from which the erection of St. Joseph's Cathedral sprung may be witnessed, during the Masses celebrated there, at the foot of the altar—and this far more than the beauties of the architecture or adornments, great though they be, forms the glory of the building.

THE new Catholic church at Mosgiel will be opened on Sunday, the 13th inst. Arrangements will be made to suit the convenience of visitors, and of which we shall give particulars in our next issue. A new church at Orepuki also will be dedicated on Sunday the 27th inst. We would, meantime, remind our readers of the ceremony to take place at St. Leonard's on Sunday next, and to which we referred in our last issue.

ACCORDING to the Rev. Mr. Kirkland it is a grave offence for a man, or at least for a divine, to give God thanks that he abides as an individual and does not become indefinitely multiplied. The Rev. Dr. Stuart in reply to some remark made at the Presbyterian Synod, it appears, ejaculated, "God forbid that I should be the Synod," on which Mr. Kirkland protested that a most offensive statement had been made and called upon the Doctor to withdraw it. Apart from all duties of being content, nevertheless, with the state in which God has placed us and duly thankful for it, the Doctor may be held com-