

the Southland School Board bestowed the four valuable scholarships just as if the competitors had been highly qualified. Such a mode of proceeding is calculated to degrade education, and turn examinations for scholarships into a species of farce. This is what comes of free and godless education. Such a system as we have it here, which bribes parents to subject their children to its degrading and demoralising influence, persuades smatterers, by highly rewarding them for trifling acquirements, that they are educated when in point of fact they are ludicrous by their profound ignorance. This is the sort of thing for which the country is paying half a million of money annually.

And, to render the contrast more striking, our sapient legislators, wretched imitators of Victorian secularists, who ignore the excellent Catholic Schools of that country, not only refuse all aid to denominational schools, where really honest school work is done, but by their regulations, or the regulations sanctioned by them, actually exclude all pupils of denominational schools from the least share of these scholarships, for which, nevertheless, their parents have been compelled to pay sharply. It is hard to conceive folly and injustice greater than this. It is not education that is encouraged under the secular and free system of education in New Zealand, but mere attendance at godless schools. This is manifest from the bestowing of valuable and numerous scholarships throughout the entire colony for a ridiculously small amount of knowledge, and the exclusion, from the competition, of the pupils of all denominational and private schools. Our legislators vote nearly half a million of money annually for education purposes, and at the same time do everything in their power to destroy denominational and private schools, and thus annihilate all competition, all rivalry, outside godless schools. The public can already see what competition exclusively within godless schools amounts to, and the man who cannot read the signs of coming events must be stupid indeed.

THE TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT.

EVERYONE is acquainted with the debate that took place last session in the House of Representatives in reference to telegrams laid on the table of the House by the Premier. It is not our intention to inflict on our readers a repetition of these painful proceedings. Our only object is to call attention to one part of the evidence given by the head and sub-head of the Telegraph Department before the Committee of the House, to which the affair was referred for examination and report. Neither do we intend to comment on the nature and circumstances of the report. It will be sufficient for our purpose to give the portions of evidence referred to above, and ask a few questions.

Dr. LEMON was asked—"Do you consider you should act in accordance with law, or on the direction of a Minister, when you know that the directions of a minister are contrary to law? I should obey the instructions of the Minister, and let him take the responsibility."

Mr. MAGINNITY was asked—"Do you consider you should act in compliance with law, or by order of the Minister, even, when you consider his directions are in violation of the law? I think I should act under the instructions of the Minister, even although I recognised that my act was in violation of the law, providing the Minister took the responsibility of my act."

Little more may be said on this subject. It is clear that under an unscrupulous Minister, the pretended secrecy of the telegraph department would be a mockery, a delusion and a snare. He might wish to know the secrets of business of individuals and families, and the law, strict as it is, would afford no protection against his curiosity. This is clear from the answers of Dr. LEMON and Mr. MAGINNITY. Should this state of things be permitted to continue people will be careful how they use the wires, and will certainly confide no secrets to telegraph offices.

Mr. Charles Waud resumes his musical tuitions on Monday, 19th inst. Mr. Waud's course of instruction comprises the pianoforte, harmonium, organ, and violincello. Address Cannongate, Dunedin.

Messrs. Simon Athy and Simon Athy, Junr., Fairfax, executors of the late Mr. Andrew Athy, are prepared to settle all the debts duly proved against the property left by the deceased.

Ladies and gentlemen interested in the fashionable games [of lawn tennis and croquet will be pleased to learn that Mr. James P. Simon, of George street, Dunedin, has received a stock of shoes especially prepared to be worn during these games. Mr. Simon has also on hand a superior supply of all possible sorts of boots and shoes.

Occasional Notes.

THE Christian Brothers' School, Dunedin will re-open on Monday next, 19th inst.

By the s.s. Australia which reached Auckland from San Francisco on Monday last there arrived six Sisters of the Order of the Sacred Heart, bound from Chicago to Timaru, for the purpose of founding a convent in the town last named. The Rev. Father Chataigner has for some years been preparing for this foundation, and we are happy in congratulating him on its immediate accomplishment. We further desire to bid the good Sisters a hearty welcome to our shores.

THE select school of the Convent of the Sacred Heart, conducted by the Sisters of Notre Dame des Missions, Christchurch, will re-open on Monday 26th inst.

ST. JOSEPH'S Girls' School, Dunedin, will re-open on Monday next 19th inst. The Convent High School will resume studies on February 2nd.

WE have received the following sums towards the Irish Relief Fund:—Rev. Father Crowley, £1 1s; Mr. W. O'Connell, £1.

HIS Worship, the Mayor of Dunedin, has called a public meeting to be held this evening for the purpose of devising means towards the relief of the distress in Ireland. It is much to be desired that the call may be heartily responded to, and our belief is that such will prove to be the case. The people of Otago are never backward in their good will to assist misfortune under whatever form it may appeal to their sympathies, and in the present instance we are persuaded they will not be found wanting. There is no need for us to impress upon our Irish fellow-citizens the special necessity that exists for their interesting themselves in this undertaking. We are aware that they are already most anxious to do their utmost in the matter, and have only been waiting until a fitting opportunity of doing so should offer itself to them. Such an opportunity will now be presented to them, and they will certainly avail themselves of it.

WE are requested to acknowledge on the part of the Dominican Sisters the receipt of remittances in connection with their Art Union from Mr. John Russell, Southland; Miss Rose Dillon, Taieri; Messrs. J. Halley, Kumara; James Frost, Waimate; Michael Rooney, Invercargill; T. O'Connor, Waimate; John Gorman, Invercargill. Miss M. A. Ryan, Kanieri; Mr. Denis Ryan, Canoe Creek.

Telegrams.

(SPECIAL TO THE MELBOURNE AGE.)

LONDON, January 10th.

Several eminent physicians declare that Bismarck is suffering from a mild form of small-pox. The latest news is that he is worse.

The Government have been warned that Fenianism is spreading throughout Ireland. A crowd plundered a number of provision stores at Cork.

The Mayor of Dublin states that the British colonies are nobly responding to his appeal.

(REUTER'S SPECIAL.)

LONDON, January 12th.

Considerable agitation prevails in Ireland owing to the continued ejection of tenants. Several serious riots occurred on Friday and Saturday, resulting in conflicts between the police and the mobs. No fatalities on either side are reported.

Readers of the *Nation* will not be surprised to learn that the gracious lady, whom they knew here under the *nom de voyage* of the "Countess of Hohenembs," has not forgotten, in the "pomp and circumstances" that surround an imperial throne, the kindly welcome which greeted her wherever she went during her Irish visit. Evidences abound in many a homestead in Meath and Kildare that the good empress has not allowed the smallest act of courtesy or attention to pass unacknowledged. The latest proof, I believe, of her Majesty's grateful remembrance of her Irish sojourn is the superb presentation with which she has, within the last few weeks, honoured the superiors and students of the Maynooth College. This beautiful gift has taken the appropriate form (appropriate as coming from a huntress) of an equestrian statuette, in solid silver, representing the symbolical encounter of St. George and the dragon. The group of figures—dragon, steed, and knight—stand fully 18 inches high, and weigh nearly 34 lbs. They were cast, as an inscription testifies, in the imperial foundry at Vienna, and as a work of art are pronounced by connoisseurs to be exquisite in design and finish. The figures are supported on a pedestal of hard, dark wood, resembling ebony, carved after a delicate shell-like pattern, and embellished with emblematic silver medallions, conspicuous amongst which is the two-headed eagle of Austria.

An immense amount of time and trouble in copying may be saved by the use of Marshall's Chromograph. All particulars will be found in our advertising columns.

Messrs. Whittaker and Co. have opened in Maclaggan street, Dunedin, a glass and china warehouse, in connection with which they also conduct the tobacconist's trade. Their advertisement will be found in another column.