

The mission by Father Des Chesnais has been a special success. Crowds partook of the Blessed Sacrament at both churches yesterday morning. Indeed, so great was the number at 7.30 at Boulcott street, that a number had to wait till next mass. Father Des Chesnais will now take a well earned rest till after Easter, and then proceed with missions in Nelson, Taranaki, Christchurch, and elsewhere. He will remain permanently in this diocese. The clergymen lately arrived will shortly be appointed to their different missions.

The question of the hour here is water. We are on the verge of a water famine. To-day we have but (?) feet in the reservoir, which is shrunk into a narrow and filthy pool. The water is mud coloured, and teeming with low forms of animal life. A serious fire now would leave us without a drop to drink, and would perhaps, if once fairly started, work its own sweet will unchecked, for what water we have would soon be exhausted.

Correspondence.

We are not responsible for the opinions of our correspondents.

GREY AND HALL—WHIG AND TORY. TO THE EDITOR OF THE TABLET.

SIR,—The time has gone by when the people are to be deluded by political nicknames. Sir George Grey is supposed to be a Whig or Liberal; Mr. Hall and his Ministry are supposed to be, or are called Tories—or, in modern *parlance*, Conservatives. We ought rather to divide political parties into the just and unjust, the sincere and the insincere, the shams and honest men. Toward Roman Catholics Mr. Hall, and his colleague Major Atkinson, are acting to some extent a just and honorable part, which contrasts forcibly with the conduct of the so-called Whig or Liberal Ministry, their followers. Both Mr. Hall and Major Atkinson have declared that Roman Catholics are suffering a great wrong under the existing educational policy of the colony, and that the wrong ought to be redressed. Yet they will make no attempt to redress the wrong. Why? They see that with such a Parliament as they now lead, and in the present temper of the dominant Protestant majority of the electors, any attempt to redress the wrong under which we suffer would be futile, or worse. A man who spits against the wind spits in his own face. Major Atkinson and his Ministry will wait till after next election and see if the dominant Protestant majority will permit them to send a message of peace to Roman Catholics by redressing the unbearable wrong which the Education Act inflicts upon them. I will not enter into Major Atkinson's motives for adopting this course, but will give him credit for a sincere wish to do justice to his Roman Catholic fellow subjects. I think, however, his course is a safe one for himself and his ministry. He shews he is a squeezable man of expediency, and not of principle. He will be a party to gross injustice to us, if a dominant Protestant majority bid him. He will sacrifice the just interests of Roman Catholics rather than quit office. It was not thus that the greatest and most chivalrous of English Protestant statesmen treated us in days gone by. If it were not in their power to redress our wrongs, they scorned to be a party to their continuance. The great William Pitt has been called a Tory. Yes, rather than abandon the cause of Irish Roman Catholics, he resigned the seals of office, though he was passionately fond of power. From Pitt's day up to O'Connell's time, a period of nearly thirty years, there was a party in England, including such men as Lord Macaulay and Lord Grey, who refused to do what Major Atkinson now does. They would not accept or retain office if they were compelled to refuse justice to Roman Catholics, and be a party to oppressing them. Many of these high principled gentlemen were excluded from the honors and emoluments of office for years, and some of them lost their election simply and solely because they scorned to act as Major Atkinson and Mr. Hall now act, and be a party to the oppression of the Roman Catholic subjects of the Crown. The days of political chivalry are gone! The days of sordid self-interest have come in their place. We live in an age of sham Liberalism and real bigotry. Whether it be quite consistent in a Roman Catholic gentleman to accept office under a ministry which professes itself ready to continue to oppress Roman Catholics if ordered by a dominant majority and a tyrant press to do so is too delicate a question for me to handle. I shall be very agreeably disappointed if Major Atkinson's Ministry ever be permitted by their tyrant masters to do what is right and just to Roman Catholics. But if we be true to ourselves and our Church, we need not mind very much what Major Atkinson and his Ministry do against us.—I am, &c.,

NORTH BRITON.

Auckland, 24th March.

BIBLE IN SCHOOLS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TABLET.

SIR,—Can it be possible that many of our highly educated fellow-colonists cannot understand the reason why Roman Catholics, object to Protestants expounding the misty verses of the "Holy Bible" to their (Catholic) children. That such a sub-class of the *genus homo* can be found in this land of boiling springs is placed beyond the powers of refutation by the action which the society that believes that the "open Bible" is the key to the palace of virtuous actions have taken to get the "best printed book" introduced into our public schools which are largely supported by Roman Catholics, Jews and Freethinkers. Is it possible for any man—let his mind be as flexible as it may, to explain the Scriptures in a manner that would be inoffensive to the religions of the children of any of our public schools? I answer, he cannot, for every true believer is biased to a certain extent in favour of the doctrines of the Church that he is a member of. If the teacher were a Presbyterian he would be sure to give an explanation of the disputed scriptural passages that would

not clash with Calvinism. The Church of England teacher would take for his "text book" Cramer's Book of Common Prayer. The Freethinking teacher would say to his pupils "examine the first book of Moses and find out how many daughters Adam and Eve were blessed with, the name of Cain's wife, and who the first fratricide thought would slay him if he were not branded. A Jewish teacher would be bound by his religion to teach that the New Testament is a mass of falsehoods, Christ an imposter, and all Christian religions inventions of the ruler of the infernal regions. And if the teacher happened to be a Roman Catholic, would he not linger fondly on such verses as "Whose sins you shall forgive, &c., &c.?" but, as Roman Catholic teachers would be few and far between, what they would teach would make very little difference in the social condition of the good people of Otago—at least, for if we are not greatly mistaken the number of Roman Catholics that would hold the situation of teacher in Biblical schools could be represented by a circle—therefore the schools would be purely Protestant. Where the Presbyterians would hold a majority in the school committees the teacher would be a staunch believer in the doctrines of Calvin, Knox, &c., and the children would hear the hedger often mutter to himself, "salvation can be gained by faith alone"—although a man is a sharp swindler, a robber of churches and a despoiler of the land—he will be saved if his faith in the goodness of Christ stands twenty degrees above Zero, and ye, my beloved children, can never become members of the "true Church" unless ye study the "Confession of Faith. If the pedagogue happened to adhere to the doctrines of the Church of England, he would be apt to exclaim accidentally, no man can be saved unless he lives according to the rules laid down in the articles which were first promulgated by "that glorious saint," who was tried and convicted on a charge of heresy, &c., &c. in 1555. Although a great number of our "world-wise men" believe that the introduction of the Bible into the "free schools of New Zealand" would be a great boon to all denominations of Christians, we are forced to say that as far as Roman Catholics are concerned "it would be adding insult to injury" unless the Government established a Roman Catholic school opposite every Biblical one. If the Bible in Schools Association believe that no one can be saved unless he reads his Bible, and that no education is complete without a knowledge of the Scriptures, why do they, if they are lovers of education and their fellow-men, not start private schools in the cities and townships as their Roman Catholic fellow-colonists have done? In fancy I hear one of my Biblical friends saying, "we would erect schools everywhere if it would cost us nothing, but you ken as well as I do that folk canna start schools without putting their hands into their pockets and pulling out brass—and that is a thing which we abhor to a greater extent than the ignorance of our fellow-men, what we (the B.S.A.) want is the Government to pass an Act which will compel Roman Catholics, Jews and Freethinkers to pay for the training of our children and the converting of theirs' to the true faith out of their own pockets." In our opinion it would be more honourable of the Bible in Schools Association to petition Parliament to pass an act under which all schools that had an average attendance of twenty could come, and in which the educational standards are as high as those in the "Government free schools," which must be left secular, for any other style would please all parties a great deal worse.—I am, &c.,

April 7th, 1881.

Commercial.

MR. DONALD STRONACH (on behalf of the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Co., Limited), reports for the week ending 13th April, as follows:—

Fat Cattle.—The moderate supply of 175 head came forward at Burnside Yards to-day. Competition from the trade was fairly animated, and last week's prices well maintained. Bullocks realised from £3 5s to £9 2s 6d, and cows £3 7s 6d to £8 15s per head. We sold drafts on account of Mr. F. Schaw and others, at from £4 2s 6d to £5 17s 6d for bullocks; and £3 7s 6d to £5 12s 6d for cows. Quotations for prime beef, 20s per 100 lb.

Fat Sheep.—The supply was small, consisting of only 1272 cross-breds, which were readily sold at an advance of 1s to 1s 6d per head on last market rates. Prices ranged from 11s 3d to 15s 9d per head. We sold 156 head on account of Mr. T. Davidson, Wyndham, at from 13s 5d to 14s 9d; and 80 head on account of Mr. J. G. Grey, Waihoia, at 11s 9d. Privately we have placed 1200 head. We quote for best mutton 2½d per lb.

Fat Lambs.—48 were forward, and sold at from 8s 9d to 11s 9d.

Fat Pigs.—98 offered, and realised from 21s to 56s each.

Store Sheep are not procurable. The demand continues very active.

Sheepskins.—We held a very large sale on Monday, at which, under good competition, fully previous prices were realised. Cross-bred skins fetched from 2s 6d up to 6s 2d for ordinary to full-woolled, merinos 1s 11d to 4s 10d; lambskins, 1s 3d to 3s 10d; pelts, 9d to 1s 8d each; skins, in bales, 6½d per lb.

Hides.—At auction on Monday we cleared all consignments forward at prices slightly below those of previous week, ranging up to 24s 6d each, and showing an average of about 4½d per lb.

Tallow.—The enquiry continues good, and valuable show no quotable change from those of last week. Well-rendered tallow is saleable at 25s to 26s per cwt., and rough fat at up to 17s per cwt., at which figures we report sales.

Grain: Wheat—Holders appear less willing to meet consumers' ideas than they were a week or two since, and as the latter are disposed to advance, business has been somewhat restricted. We cannot in the meantime advance on our quotations in last report, namely, prime milling, 3s 9d to 3s 10d; fair to good, 3s 6d to 3s 8d; fowl feed, 2s 3d to 3s per bushel. Oats are in considerable demand, and all coming forward are readily placed at late rates, viz., 1s 6d to 1s 7d for good feed oats; milling would command 1s 8d to 1s 9d, but there is none offering. Barley—No change to report.