

WINTON AND QUEENSTOWN.

MR. W. CUNNINGHAM, Country Convasser and Collector for the NEW ZEALAND TABLET, will visit The Lakes and surrounding districts next week, and we trust our subscribers will render him every assistance by settlement of accounts furnished, and by information conducive to the welfare of this journal.

JOHN F. PERRIN, Manager.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

HIBERNIAN.—There is no longer any connection between the Society in Otago and Canterbury and that in Melbourne.

D E A T H.

CARLTON.—At Coolnakilly, Wicklow, Ireland, on 19th July, Thomas Carlton, aged 68; also, on 9th August, Mary Anne Carlton, aged 59, the beloved parents of B. S. Carlton of this city.—R.I.P.

The New Zealand Tablet.

FIAT JUSTITIA.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1882.

GODLESS EDUCATION, AND THE "LION OF LIBERALISM."



Y Act of Parliament the national system of education is purely secular. Under this system no dogma or principle of religion of any sort can be taught. All religious teaching is by law prohibited in national schools. The teachers may be of any religion, of no religion, may be Jews, Turks, heathens, even Freethinkers. No catechism, no religious book is admitted into the schools, no minister of religion dare enter there. The law prohibits the teaching of even the existence of God, of the immortality of the soul, of rewards and punishments in the other life. This is the system according to law. Can any man deny the accuracy of this description of the national system of education in New Zealand?

And yet the "Lion of Liberalism" insists that this system which he has always upheld, simply because of its utter godlessness, is theistic and Christian. How can the system which the law declares is purely secular, be at the same time Christian? Nevertheless this is the paradox which the "Lion" seriously sets himself to prove, and the argument is worthy of the thesis and the logician. It appears there are in some of the reading books used in Canterbury and Otago, lessons in which the name of God is mentioned, and in which some things relative to Christianity are spoken of without a curse, a sneer, or a blasphemy. The conclusion consequently is, according to the "Lion," that our system of national education is theistic and Christian. This is truly wonderful.

The argument of the "Lion," may be put as follows:—Major Proposition.—By Act of Parliament the national system of education in New Zealand is purely secular.

Minor Proposition.—But in the National schools in two provinces the name of God and some Christian principles are spoken of in some reading lessons.

Conclusion.—Therefore the system is theistic and Christian.

Well, now let us give an argument in all respects similar and equally conclusive.

Major Proposition.—By Act of Parliament our national system of education is purely secular.

Minor Proposition.—But in the reading books of the national schools of two of the provinces some principles of political economy are spoken of.

Conclusion.—Therefore our national system of education is a system of political economy.

In the mode of argumentation employed by the "Lion of Liberalism" there is a *transitus a genere ad genus*, which every logician will not fail to perceive and laugh at. Our New Zealand system of education is, by Act of Parliament, godless, because the teaching of religion is strictly prohibited, in all schools established under it, and the mere accident of the mention of the name of God and Christianity in some reading books which pupils are asked to read merely for the purpose of learning to read—and not of learning either theism or

Christianity, cannot repeal the Act of Parliament and remove the inherent godlessness of the system.

But the "Lion" has found another mare's nest. Bishop MORAN, it appears, recently called this godless system Protestant, and this is regarded as a change of front, and as a confession that after all the system is not godless. This, however, does not by any means follow. For it may be at the same time both godless and Protestant. What is Protestant? Is it not that which protests against the Catholic Church? And is it not notorious that the New Zealand system of education was made secular or godless mainly as a protest against the teaching of the Catholic Church?

But not satisfied with displaying his wonderful power of argumentation, the "Lion" gratifies himself by an onslaught, not quite decent, on the reading books of the Christian Brothers, and says that this is one of the schools for which a subsidy is asked from the State. How does he know? He certainly has no authority to say so. Catholics have demanded justice for their schools, and mean to continue to do so. But they have not asked for aid for all their schools, and we are by no means certain that the Christian Brothers would accept aid. It is time enough for the "Lion" to assail the Christian Brothers' reading books when they ask Free-thinkers or Protestants of any denomination to frequent their schools, or the Government for a subsidy. The "Lion" sneers at a beautiful story in one of these books, and shows thereby how he is prepared to respect Catholic principles and practices if he should succeed in driving Catholic children into the public schools, a thing which he has so deeply at heart.

But all the misrepresentations, unsound argument, insults, and noise of the "Lion," and his coadjutors in the Press and elsewhere, will not persuade any right-minded man that no injustice is done to Catholics in compelling them to pay for the free and godless education of other people's children; and in maintaining at the public expense a system of education which efficaciously excludes one seventh of the population of the country from all participation in the expenditure of the taxes they pay for educational purposes. The injustice is so palpable that no amount of special pleading, no amount of sophistry, no amount of misrepresentation or bigotry, can so blind them as to make them convinced that justice is done to Catholics, because they can use the public schools, if they will be only obliging enough to the "Lion" and his party to cease to be Catholics and apostatise from all their most cherished and most certain principles.

INFATUATED "X."

THE *Otago Daily Times* published on last Tuesday morning a letter headed "Religious Education," and signed "X." The heading is hardly appropriate, for in this letter there is nothing about religion and hardly anything about education. But there is a great deal of vituperation of Catholics. Who is "X."? Is he one of the well-paid Otago schoolmasters, or is he a member of one of those families rather numerous in New Zealand, which rejoice in large, regularly-paid incomes, drawn from the public revenues by several sisters, or brothers and sisters, all members of the same family, or is he some fanatic, anxious enough to strike down the liberties and trample on the rights of Catholics, but so craven as to be afraid to append his name to his letter? We do not know, but one thing is quite certain, he is a coward and would be a tyrant.

And he is something else also. He candidly acknowledges that "the system of public schools in New Zealand is a Protestant one, and the whole tone of the schools anti-Catholic": and yet he maintains that Catholics have nothing to justly complain of in being compelled to pay for the maintenance of this avowedly Protestant and anti-Catholic system. "X." has lost shame as well as all sense of justice and fair play. His openly acknowledged position that of an absurd demented man.

It is clear from "X's" letter that he upholds the strict right of the majority to do as it pleases, and the obligation of the minority to submit in silence to whatever the majority may ordain. It is on this ground and on this alone that he can censure the agitation of Catholics for justice—for a fair share of the taxes devoted to education in aid of their own schools. Very well, be it so for argument's sake. Why, then, his and others perpetual whine about the treatment of Protestant minorities in Catholic countries? If the majority has a right to do as it pleases, no wrong on his own principles is