

very well have been undertaken by any zealous and intelligent layman belonging to his own Church; and had he succeeded in inducing the chairman of his meeting, Mr. Callan, to enter the contest in place of himself he would have acted wisely. Probably Mr. Donnelly's ambiguous movements annoyed him, and this not unlikely had the effect of drawing forth his somewhat unexpected announcement, and having once declared himself as a candidate he cannot very easily retire. Mr. Donnelly, with noticeable adroitness, is playing the role of the martyr, to what we suppose he considers—or, at all events, wishes the electors to believe—is ecclesiastical persecution. He states that he has never said that he is in favour of Denominational education, the reason being, doubtless, that he did not consider it prudent to do so. The struggle with him must have been violent and protracted in deciding between principle and expediency—between adhering to and openly advocating Denominationalism and passing it by on the other side.—*Dunedin Morning Herald*.

It is a remarkable fact that Dr. Moran has failed to get any layman of his own faith to come forward to represent the views which he so eloquently and so persistently advocates. The fact is, it is far more a priest's question than a people's question. As we recently showed, even Dr. Moran himself, genial as he is in private life, has thought it needful, on coming straight from Rome, to threaten his people with the worst ecclesiastical pains and penalties if they dared to send their children to the State schools. He doubtless has his orders direct from the Pope himself: he knows that the absolute power of the priests depends in great measure on their having exclusive access to the children of their charge; and while he is the representative and mouthpiece of the worst ecclesiastical tyranny in the world, he stands before a public audience and talks about civil and religious liberty! If he is such a friend of liberty why does he not permit his people to do as they please in this matter, without exercising an overwhelming pressure upon their consciences? We say unhesitatingly that this is not a question of the rights of 70,000 Catholics, but of the aims and wishes of a tyrannous hierarchy, the head of which is the "infallible" Pope himself. Speaking of the money voted for the purpose of education, Dr. Moran says: "In the expenditure of that money for the purpose for which it has been voted, 70,000 of your fellow-citizens have had no share whatever." This we entirely deny. Thousands of Roman Catholic children have enjoyed a free education out of that vote. And wherever the pressure of the priests is for a time withdrawn, there do the people still avail themselves of the advantages of such education. Left to themselves, only a minority of the Roman Catholic laity would be dissatisfied, and we deny the right of Dr. Moran to speak in the name of the whole of the Roman Catholic people of the colony in denouncing the system. We do not believe that the majority of the Roman Catholics desire to be a peculiar people in this respect, segregated from their Protestant fellow-colonists into separate seminaries, and trained in a system opposed as much politically and socially as it is in matters of faith to the exercise of private judgment and individual freedom of thought. The State is indeed bound to leave every man to the free exercise of his religion, but it is not bound to step out of its way to hand over a large section of the people to the absolute control of an alien hierarchy. We have over and over again shown that we are not indifferent to the claims of religion; and in advocating the "religious half-hour" as a means of providing an opportunity for Roman Catholics, equally with all other religious bodies, to inculcate the special tenets of their faith on the youthful members of their own body, we have endeavoured to show how the only valid objection to our present system can be fairly met. Further than that we are not prepared to go. . . . We say, then, to Bishop Moran, as we hope the electors of the Peninsula will say to him next Monday, Hands off! rash prelate; hands off this ark of our liberties!—*Otago Daily Times*.

We must legislate for the greatest good of the greatest number, and foremost among the duties of the State in a Democratic country such as New Zealand, is undoubtedly that of seeing that every child in the community is educated. Experience has taught us that denominationalism has most certainly failed to accomplish that task in the past, and it therefore rests with those who are agitating for a change in the law to prove that it can be so amended as to secure what national education aims at giving, while making the required concessions to the religious bodies. And that, we contend, has never yet been proved. The vast majority of the people of the Colony are sincerely convinced that its future greatness and stability are intimately bound up with its free, undenominational, and compulsory system of education, and that any concessions in the direction demanded by Dr. Moran would be disastrous to the best interests of the community.—*Christchurch Press*.

Denying utterly as we do that any injustice whatever is perpetrated by the Education Act in regard to any section of the community, we have, unfortunately, the fact to deal with that the existence of such injustice is forcibly and persistently asserted, and it will be supported by all the authority of the Church of Rome. Dr. Moran, so far as he is a free agent, is thoroughly clear-headed and practical; assuming the injustice as a fact he states unreservedly how he conceives it should be remedied. To this portion of his speech we would direct the particular attention of the electors of the Peninsula. He would have, he says, the Catholics receive what he terms their fair share of the educational appropriations. We presume his meaning to be that capitation money on the same scale and under similar conditions as the State schools should be paid in respect of the Catholic schools, and that a proportion of the moneys available for school buildings should also be allocated. Such an arrangement would simply be destructive of the present system of education, and would lead to the establishment in lieu thereof of denominational schools. What was conceded to one denomination could not reasonably be denied to another, nor is the ground at all tenable that the Roman Catholic body alone has a right or claim to separate schools. "You may talk," said Mr. Rolleston in his speech last session on Mr.

Pyke's Bill, "about liberalism as much as you like, but if you destroy this national system of education you will deprive the people of that education which fits them most fully to form a nation. This system we look to as breaking down class distinctions, and tending to produce a people with common aspirations and common hopes."—*Dunedin Evening Star*.

LESSER REPTILES.

The Bishop's address is almost entirely taken up with a discussion of the Education question, and its tone is certainly not that of the polished ecclesiastic. A vein of mingled ferocity and exaggeration runs throughout it. We suspect that Mr. Donnelly's unwise assertion of spiritual independence—if it really be independence—will prove fatal to his prospect of rising to the head of the poll when the election takes place. Meanwhile, the question forces itself upon our minds,—as doubtless it does upon the minds of the public at large,—whether the agitation against the "godless" schools is not practically confined to the Roman Catholic priests, and is not sympathized in to any great extent by the Roman Catholic laity.—*N.Z. Christian Record*.

Dr. Moran, Roman Catholic Bishop, Dunedin, has issued an address to the electors of the Peninsula, for which district he offers himself as a candidate for a seat in the General Assembly. This step on his part has met with the strong disapproval of the Dunedin Press, and we expect the opinion of the inhabitants of New Zealand generally will be pretty unanimous in the same direction. "As a man, a citizen, and an elector of the Peninsula" he abstractly has a right in common with everyone holding these qualifications to aspire to a seat in the Legislature. But as an ecclesiastic of an organisation claiming a power and authority in all matters, temporal as well as spiritual, superior to that of the Queen and Government of the country, and owing absolute allegiance only to the Pope in Rome, he will not be considered by many outside his own influence as eligible for the office. His weekly fulminations from the pulpit and the Press against the laws, law-makers and institutions of the country, ought to disqualify him. No one has ever more determinedly, systematically and persistently exerted himself to set class against class and to stir up and maintain the most bitter of all animosities—religious animosities—in the community than he has done ever since he set foot in the colony. Indeed, it is only through the good sense and prudence exercised by the members of the Roman Catholic faith that serious consequences have not ensued from the doctor's intemperate language and behaviour. While we have no idea that he will ever obtain a seat in the Legislature of a British colony, it might do himself good if he did. He would not there have it "all his own way," as in the pulpit; he would have to debate with men of intelligence, education, and ability—"foemen worthy of his steel"—and the result might tend towards his own good, if not that of his constituents.—*Chutha Leader*.

THE DISTRESS IN DONEGAL.

THE following letter has been addressed to the *Freeman*:—

Kilcar, county Donegal, 11th Nov., 1882.

Sir,—Just at present the burning memory of the horrors of '46 and '47 is being recalled amongst the poor people of this parish. They are this day trembling in contemplation of that event when they see the potato crop, their staple article of diet, all but gone. These poor, honest, industrious peasants entirely depend on the hazards of one crop, and if that crop fail inevitable want and misery must be the result. They are destitute of any other aid. They have no manufacturing industries, no public works, no labour of any kind by which they could earn something to arrest the existing distress consequent on the total failure of the potato. The whole parish (650 families) are utterly without reserve or resource to fall back on in time of reverse. The state of things will be for them, unless aided very soon, critical and alarming in the extreme. I may say there has been amongst them for many years past a partial famine owing to the failing harvests; but the terrific storm that raged along these coasts on the 1st October last swept away the greater part of their grain and hay, and, too, carried off the roofs of their little cabins, leaving neither screws nor timber behind. Some of these cabins are still unroofed, the occupants finding shelter in their neighbours' houses, being unable to roof them for want of means. I have had an ample opportunity for the last month of going through the parish. I visited many of their houses (if houses some of them may be called). I saw the quantity of potatoes they had gathered in, and with a safe conscience I can tell the public that the half of these 650 families have not the seed for the coming Spring, and I am sorry to say that many of them have not a four-footed animal for market. They do not wish for the pauper's dole if they could avoid it. What they want and what they desire is employment. Their voices are now raised in warning to the Government that a dreadful catastrophe is at hand, and will that Government be deaf to the cry of a people who will, without doubt, starve in the near future unless promptly relieved? I hope not. If the Government fear exaggeration, let them at once institute an official investigation. Unfortunately some of us know the sad and lamentable result of the delay of giving aid in '47. These poor people, too, would be most anxious to take advantage of the Arrears Act, but it is not in the power of many of them. They have not the rent to pay, and, as I said before, they have nothing to bring to the market to make up the rent required. I am forming a committee, which will receive and acknowledge any help coming from a charitable hand to a people in veritable need—a people who have to tide over a long space of nine months, and who have not, I may say, at this moment a potato to eat; no money; no credit. I'll repeat it, if there be doubt cast on the above meagre statement of facts, let things be examined, however superficially, and it will be found that the dark side of the picture is not exhibited.—I am, Mr. Editor, yours faithfully,

PATRICK LOGUE, P.P.