been printing from the evidence taken by the Royal Commission on education throw a very strong light on the paragraphs on which the Commission have summed up their findings on the subject of political patronage. They show the utter imposture of Mr. Smith's statements about private and confidential information from officers of the department on which he made his appointments and promotions, and show them to have been cases of political jobbery in which some Berryite member of Parliament preferred a demand and 'the Major' greeted it with his unfailing 'All right, my dear boy.' The shameless case in which the son and daughter of Mr. Richardson, M.L.A., were wrongfully appointed over the heads of a large number of senior teachers appear in the evidence in their damning detail. The St. Arnaud cases, in which unqualified young women from Ballarat, *protégées* of 'the Major,' were appointed to schools where no extra assistance was asked for, are set out in full, and are clearly instances of the most corrupt political jobbery, in which 'the Major' paid for electioneering services by appointments given at the expense of the State. The infamous Beechworth scandal, in which a woman of known immoral character was appointed by Mr. Smith, on the recommendation of Mr. Billson, M.L.A., supported, it seems, by the approval of the department, is the worst of all, from its gross disregard of every consideration of public decency. As the evidence stands as a whole, Mr. Billson, Mr. Richardson, and 'the Major' stand in a very unenviable light before the public, and when the question of political patronage comes up for practical discussion the illustrations these worthies have given us of its exercise must not be forgotten." The system, then, is not only bad in itself, but eminently capable of being made worse by the unscrupulous manner in which men in power make use of it in their own interests, and those of their friends.—In America it has been made the means of carrying out all kinds of dishonest undertakings, and generally on a gigantic scale. —In Auckland it has been employed by Orangemen for promoting their particular objects, and in Victoria we see how Major Smith has used it.—But doubtless we have still a good deal more to see.

SHUT OUT.

THE prospects of the rising generation in Hokitika at present look somewhat gloomy.—The rising generation, in fact, bids fair to grow up uncultivated by secularism, and to have no part in the advantages to be derived from a participation in the free and compulsory godlessness provided for the Colony at large by a wise and devoted legislature.—Compulsion, in short, at Hokitika, as matters are at present, seems to lean in the opposite way, for the school is shut up, and the children, we may presume, are left to roam the streets at their discretion, or that of their parents perhaps, except in those instances where they attend the Catholic school—or other private schools if any such there be. The cause of the turn out is a difference that has occurred between the Education Board and the School Committee respecting the expenditure of the education funds, and each body accuses the other of extravagance and misappropriation. The complaint of the Committee is that they have been refused a sufficient salary to pay a caretaker to keep the schoolhouse and its surroundings in proper order, and that they have not been provided with money to buy fuel. They further allege that the Board should have abundant means of furnishing them with all that is necessary, and would have them had they not been worse than extravagant, and especially had they not misappropriated the funds by the purchase of offices in which they sit, and which they were not justified in buying. But it would appear that the Hokitika Committee is not the only body in the district that complains, and, if we are to believe the statements of one Mr. W. Douglas, who writes to the *West Coast Times*, the shutting-up of schools there generally seems anything rather than an impossibility. "Hokitika," he writes, "is not the only school committee crying out in desperation for funds to pay for cleaning and fuel. Arahura is in the same plight; and I should not wonder if the closing policy—if it may be so designated—would follow there next. I know of this case; but are there not many such cases? I don't in the least hesitate to say that there are." The pupils of the godless schools, in short, generally throughout the district seem called upon to perform their tasks somewhat under similar circumstances with the poor seamstress, who sang Hood's "Song of the Shirt," for, although we do not suppose they are hungry, they are certainly represented to us as in the middle of poverty and dirt.—The secular system, then, according to its latest developements, has proved to be a true apple of discord, and besides its other advantages it would seem admirably calculated to create and foster among its pupils a spirit of self-assertion and a determination to have all that they may consider to be desirable. The situation, meantime, at Hokitika, seems hopeless, and the tone of quiet despair with which the *West Coast Times* concludes an article on the subject is very affecting. The writer seems to think that they are all wrong together and that there is no hope at all of their ever coming right again. "Instances of gross extravagance could be cited against them (the Board)," he says. "They are, at the present moment, up to their ears in deep water. But does all this justify the Committee in following their example? The Committee should not have over-run the constable in the manner it has done. Any damage done to the building should become a responsibility of the Board, if they will not pay a caretaker. But even admitting that the Board is in the wrong in not recognising the services of the caretaker, is the course just adopted by the Committee likely to improve matters? The Committee may probably hope, by the closing of the school, to cause the Government to appoint a Royal Commission to enquire into the past administration and present constitution of the Board. Knowing something of the views of the present Minister of Education on the question of interference with Boards of education, we cannot for a moment believe that such an object, however desirable, will be achieved. Neither can we see in what way matters are likely to be improved, beyond entering a protest against the Board's management, by keeping the school closed." But at least it will prevent the children from soiling their clothes and getting colds and chilblains, and our contemporary should learn to be thankful for small mercies—particularly when there are no big ones to be had for love or money—or at least, for love, since the money seems to have gone, the Lord only knows where.

THE HON. JOHN F. FINERTY.

JOHN F. FINERTY, the editor of the *Irish Citizen* of Chicago, is a member elect of the next Congress. He is now thirty-eight years old. He stands over six feet in his stockings. He is broad-shouldered and deep-chested. He has the solemn dignity at times of a great Indian chief, and again the maddest flow of animal spirits when surrounded by congenial company. He has a large head and a high forehead, surmounted by a shock of curly dark brown hair. His eyes are dark. His nose is straight, while his chin denotes iron courage and will. A brown moustache curls in at the corners of his mouth, over a full imperial.

Finerty in many ways is a very remarkable man. He belongs to an old Irish family that traces back its ancestry to the Irish kings. He is nearer to the type of Lever's dashing, generous military heroes than is often found in modern times. Finerty is an eloquent speaker. In private life he is a delightful story-teller; in journalism he is an accomplished writer. He has a nervous, virile style, always above the commonplace.

He has a courage that is something beyond even recklessness. He is a born soldier. He served in our army during the Rebellion, entering the army when a mere lad. To tell Finerty not to do a thing simply because it is dangerous is to make certain of his rejecting the advice. He began his career in journalism as a correspondent of the *Chicago Times* during the celebrated Sioux campaign, where General Custer fell. He never fell back upon his privileges as a correspondent. Gun in hand, he rode in the front of every engagement. He wrote no despatches as long as there was any fighting to be done. One day a lieutenant and a dozen men were sent out upon a scouting expedition of extreme danger. Finerty asked to go with the party. He was told that he would in all probability meet his death. Why not remain in safety in camp? Of course Finerty went. The little scouting party, a few hours out, was cut off, and for three days were chased through the mountains. The party had to entrench themselves and fight at every turn, and run through the most desperate chances. Had they been on the plains they could not have escaped. After three days of constant marching, fighting, with no sleeping and scarcely any food, the party finally reached camp and safety. Finerty's account of the three days was a magnificent piece of brilliant description, and would have alone made his reputation had the occasion been any other than an Indian war.

Finerty afterwards became a regular writer on the *Times* in Chicago. One day an alderman—a big, burly, fighting man—was angry at an article in the paper and called to learn who was the author. The writer of the article was small and a man of peace. Without hesitation he gave Finerty as the author. The alderman hunted up Finerty and charged him with writing it. Finerty saw a fight was imminent, and did not deny the paternity of the article, for fear his courage might be called into question. So the alderman, hearing no denial, charged with all the energy of misguided rage, and was promptly knocked down. After he had been knocked down about seven times the alderman grew weary and got up very slowly. Finerty saw he was satisfied and said: "Now you are through with your fight. I do not mind telling you I did not write the article." Then the alderman insisted upon shaking hands and apologising.

Finerty left the *Times* about two years ago, and started the *Irish Citizen*. It has paid from the start. Finerty conducts his paper as the organ of Irish independence. He says he knows many Englishmen who are good fellows, but he hates them collectively. He has the history of Europe at his tongue's end. Passionately devoted to the cause of Ireland, he is one of the best possible representatives of his people.

Two years ago this winter he was in Washington as an editorial correspondent. He lived there for one season, and carefully studied Congress from the galleries. When he comes to talk in the House it is certain that his brilliant wit, courage, dignified presence, and eloquence will command attention.—*Pilot*.

At a special meeting of the Charity Organising Society, to promote emigration, a letter from Sir Alexander Galt, High Commissioner for Canada, was read. The writer said that the Canadian Government would not sanction the emigration to Canada of habitual paupers. She was willing to absorb destitute boys and girls in reasonable numbers, and to provide a periodical inspection of them and a record of their disposal.