

studies is to be for so many thousands of Catholic students, he will not find it quite easy to get an answer. We know well that under no circumstances would all, or even the majority, go beyond an intermediate education, but we know also that a university career is the reasonable and only legitimate completion for studies such as theirs.

A distinguished Irishman, the Conservative statesman, Lord Cairns, expressed this view in a happy metaphor when he spoke of the National system of Primary education as the foundation, the Intermediate as the walls, and the university as the roof, of the entire structure. For Protestants and Presbyterians, the edifice is complete, and available without the sacrifice of any religious principles. They have their universities, richly endowed and splendidly equipped, where the cream of their youth have opened to them every career in which higher culture avails. As far as we, Irish Catholics, are concerned, there is no roof over us, and our educational system is incomplete, and, by that incompleteness, pernicious.

It must now be plain to everyone that Irish Catholics, as a body, will not accept a university education which is either Protestant or godless. Catholic parents will not send their sons to Trinity College nor to the Queen's Colleges, and consequently the only alternatives practically remaining are either to keep the Catholics of Ireland in ignorance and let them fall behind every other country in the world, or give them opportunities of university education which their consciences can accept.

It is out of the question for us to hope to supply our needs by any private efforts or sacrifices. For many years we struggled to maintain the Catholic university of Ireland, and the amount of money which was voluntarily subscribed to it was enormous in relation to our resources. But, aggravated as it was by the absence of all legal recognition for our university, the unequal effort was found to be oppressive. This is a very poor country and the Catholics are the poorest of its people. Even the generous provision which our forefathers had made for religion, and which would have enabled us to provide for education also, was long ago taken from us; and we have been forced, out of our poverty, to provide all the means for the maintenance of our Church and of its multifarious institutions. We have not, then, the means to endow a university for ourselves, and even if we were richer, it would be an unequal competition between us and colleges richly endowed by public funds.

In these days, too, education is growing in costliness to such an extent that even in England and in the great centres of manufacture and commerce, where the princely munificence of private citizens has founded magnificent colleges, we read of the appeals of the colleges of the Victoria University at Manchester and Leeds, and Liverpool, to Parliament for increased grants to enable them to carry on their work. Surely, if the maintenance of University Colleges is considered to be too much for the resources of perhaps the wealthiest communities in the world, it must be evident that in a poor country such as Ireland it is unreasonable and unjust to throw such a burden upon Catholics, and upon them alone.

What, then, do we claim? Simply to be put on an equality with our Protestant fellow-countrymen. We take Trinity College, Dublin, with its endowments and its privileges, and seeing what is done by public funds and legal enactments for half a million of Protestants of the Disestablished Church of Ireland, we claim that at least as much should be done for the three millions and a half of Catholics.

We do not seek to impair the efficiency of any institution. We do not want to take one shilling from the endowments of any other body. We look—apart from the consideration of our own inequality—with much admiration and sympathy upon the work which Trinity College and the Belfast Queen's College are doing. But we ask, as a matter of simple justice, that the Catholics of Ireland should be put on a footing of perfect equality with them.

How that equality is to be reached, it is not for us now to define. We have stated on many occasions that we are not irrevocably committed to any one principle of settlement; and whether that settlement is carried out through a distinct Catholic university or through a college, we shall be prepared to consider any proposal with an open mind, and with a sincere desire to remove, rather than to aggravate, difficulties.

In putting forward this claim we consider it not unreasonable on our part to take into account the declarations of the present Government on the subject of education. If there is one principle more than another to which they stand committed, it is that of denominationalism in education. As far as abstract principles are involved we might accept almost without qualification the statements on the subject made by the Prime Minister in recent speeches. And we cannot think that, when it comes to an application of those principles, he will seek to limit it to countries which are mainly Protestant, such as England and Scotland.

If, then, our demand is in harmony with the principles which the Government professes, and if at the same time its concession is necessary in order to give the people of Ireland the educational advantages which are essential conditions of progress in a modern state, we can hardly believe that it will be either refused or postponed.

It is now twenty-three years since this was made a Cabinet question, and yet in spite of the protests and the agitation of the Catholics of Ireland, in Parliament and out of it in the meantime, we are practically in the same position as we were then.

In England such a miscarriage of legislation on a matter of so much importance would be impossible. There Parliament responds to public opinion. The English people are able, through their Parliamentary representatives, to make and unmake Governments, and their maturely-formed wishes must be granted. Unfortunately it is not so in Ireland. Our wishes and our demands count for very little. We get whatever the Cabinet, which has been formed by English public opinion, thinks good for us; but we are made to feel bitterly the uselessness of constitutional agitation on our part. Violence and excess obtain ready recognition, and lead to the redress of grievances; but the constitutionally expressed desire of the Irish

people through Parliamentary elections and the action of their members of Parliament count unfortunately for very little.

It is little wonder, then, that the minds of our people are alienated from their Government, and every day lose confidence in constitutional methods. This a state of things which we regard as deplorable, but still quite natural.

For over forty years we have been agitating this grievance of university education. At any time during all these years an overwhelming majority of our countrymen were in favour of our claims. In every way known to the constitution we have urged them. At this moment, at least two thirds of the Irish members of Parliament are with us, and speak and vote for us; and yet, while we see one generation after another of our young countrymen pass from the schools into active life with the mark of educational inferiority upon them, and our country, poor as she is in many respects, denied the opportunity of cultivating the wealth which God has given her, we are powerless to do more than complain and wait in the hope that some enlightened British statesman may do something for us.

Perhaps reflection on the history of this one question may make clear to Englishmen why Irishmen desire the management of their own affairs, and stand aloof from the actual Government of the country in a spirit of distrust and alienation.

Yet, although our task is a weary one, we would ask our countrymen still to urge their claim for freedom of education, which, in reality, is freedom of religion; and we would impress upon our Parliamentary representatives the importance of pressing this question at all times on the attention of Parliament.

† MICHAEL CARD, LOGUE, Chairman.

† FRANCIS J. MACCORMACK.

Bishop of Galway and Kilmacduagh.

† JOHN HEALY,

Bishop of Clonfert.

Secretaries  
to the  
meeting.

## INVERCARGILL.

(From an occasional correspondent.)

December 11, 1896.

WEDNESDAY last was Southland's big holiday, Show Day. The weather was fine and bright, and everything contributed to make this year's show the great success it undoubtedly was. Crowds of people came in by every train, and the town presented a busy appearance. On entering the grounds one's attention is caught by a strange looking individual with long hair, clad in approved Wild West fashion, big hat, pistols in his belt and all the paraphernalia usually given to that character. He is talking with great volubility to an astonished rustic audience concerning Buffalo Bill and his performances. He is the proprietor of a performing kangaroo and an "educated" pig. The stream of his eloquence is interrupted by one of the syrens who does duty as doorkeeper calling out to "Jack" that the pig is sick. Jack comes down from his platform and in a few minutes he is heard inside the tent talking to the admiring audience as glibly as he was a few minutes before talking to those outside. Just then our meditations are interrupted by a chorus, sung most abominably out of time, of "Hi, hi, hi, come along this way," heard above the bleating of sheep, the bellowing of cattle, the neighing of horses, the rattle of machinery, and the scream of traction engines. Well, we went on to hear what all the "Hi, hi, hi-ing" was about. On our way we stopped to look at an individual rapidly disposing of cutlery of all kinds: knives and forks of the same quality could be bought just as cheaply in town; but simply because it was a show day we let these "Cheap Jacks" impose on us. Arrived at the tent of the "Hi, hi, hi-ers" we see one of the number dressed in the orthodox Mephistopheles costume; another is dressed like a cricketer, but wears boxing gloves, so he cannot be called a knight of the willow; another has a costume belonging to a period, race and clime which we are utterly at a loss to know. Anyhow, it must have been a pretty ancient period. Just as we were moving away we noticed an individual disappearing under the canvas at the back, while the company were engaged in front.

A little further on we came to the cattle pens. All classes of cattle are shown, and there are some magnificent animals amongst them. The sheep, too, are a splendid variety and the same can be said of the horses of all classes. The show of implements is very fine, and the perfection to which they are brought excites the wonder of the beholder. We have machines that can plough, harrow, sow, reap, bind, thresh, and talk; the only thing we cannot do by machinery is to think. 'Tis a pity; a fortune awaits the inventor of such a machine; and what a vast amount of bother it would save!

But the most interesting class of all is the class of people. It would be hard to find through the length and breadth of New Zealand a better dressed and better tempered crowd. How delightfully democratic we all become on show day. Here is a gentleman with tall hat and spotless dress talking quite familiarly with a horny-handed son of toil. Doubtless you would say they are speaking on affairs of high State importance, and that of course levels all social barriers. Not a bit of it! The gentleman in the tall hat is but trying to sell a reaper and binder, or is arranging a deal in oats. But you will say—surely he will impose on the rustic simplicity of the other. You could not make a greater mistake. Times are changed since the days when Virgil sang of the simple lives of the husbandmen, of their sports on their festival days, when under the shade of the spreading trees they poured out their libations to the gods; or when they yoked their sturdy oxen to the rude plough. The broad-backed hills are planted now, not with vines, but with corn; the elms and osiers are of the past. *O tempora! O mores!*

One cannot go to shows of this kind without being struck by the vast amount of good that must be done by them to all classes of the community. The competition they encourage must result in better breeds of animals, higher perfection in machinery and increased skill in the management of produce. Our views of men

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