

great minority in Parliament and the country, are treated most liberally,

The system in Manitoba is very similar to that of Quebec. The Imperial Parliament of England in 1867, when passing the British North American Act—the Canadian Constitution—removed the question of repealing the separate school clauses of the law of these various Provinces from the region of practical politics by prohibiting any province of the Dominion of Canada from making any law which would “*prejudicially affect any right or privilege with respect to denominational schools, which any class of persons have by law in the province at the time of the Union.*” So that it is not in the power of any legislature in the Dominion to do away with either separate or denominational schools. Subject to this provision of the Imperial Act, the various Canadian Legislatures can enact any law calculated to increase education or improve its administration. In order not to stretch out this leader to an unreasonable length, we shall now confine our remarks to the action of the Ontario Legislature, because the Catholics of this Province are, like ourselves, in a great minority there, and, consequently, what the majority has done there will be instructive to us and our Legislature. Chapter 227 of the “*Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1887,*” contains the present separate school laws of that Province. This provides, so far as Catholic schools are concerned, that five or more Catholic heads of families, resident in any rural or suburban school district, may convene a meeting of those persons who desire to have a Catholic school, for the purpose of establishing the same, and that such persons may periodically elect a board of trustees to control and manage the school, which board is invested with all the powers and responsibilities of a body corporate. The supporters of such a separate school are exempted from paying municipal school taxes, and the trustees are empowered to levy school rates on the Catholic inhabitants, they consenting, which rates are collected by the municipal collectors, and handed to the board of separate school trustees. Companies may require any portion of their property to be assessed for separate school purposes; and in cases where the landlord pays the taxes, the tenant is taken as the person primarily liable, and he decides as to whether the school rates shall be paid to the public or separate school. Each separate school is entitled to share proportionately in all public grants made by the Legislature, and is under the supervision of the department of education. Two Inspectors of that department visit all such schools regularly, and report on their condition.—Such is the law in a province which is in almost all respects very similar to New Zealand. In Ontario, the spirit of justice, liberality, and fair play, has moulded the school law. Why cannot we have such a law in force here in New Zealand? Why? this is the question, and there can be only one answer. Simply because our Legislature is not actuated by a spirit of justice, liberality, and fair play. This is the only reason. In Ontario the education law which we described in the above sentences, works well, promotes education, is found to be economical, and promotes peace and contentment, whereas the bigotry and injustice of the education law in New Zealand and Australasia promotes extravagance, renders education extremely difficult to tens of thousands of its inhabitants, cherishes the spirit of bigotry and ascendancy, begets heart-burnings, disturbs peace and harmony, and leaves in the hearts of hundreds of thousands of colonists a rankling sense of injustice. Would it not be wise for our Legislature to follow the example of Ontario, and magnanimously do justice to all its subjects. Our answer to the question with which we began this article, is, the Canadian system of education, though allowing certain variations as to details in the several provinces, is everywhere a system of justice, fair-play, and consummate wisdom. For, while consideration is shown for all, and justice done to all, and schools placed within the reach of all, the question of education is forever removed from the domain of practical politics, and from the possibility of becoming a bone of contention amongst the inhabitants of the Dominion.

On Christmas day several Masses were as usual celebrated in St. Joseph's Cathedral, Dunedin, beginning at 6 a.m. and concluding with Pontifical High Mass at 11 a.m. The Bishop acted as celebrant of the Mass, with the Rev. Fathers McMullin and O'Neil as deacon and sub-deacon respectively; the Rev. Father O'Donnell, master of ceremonies; and the Rev. Father Lynch, Adm., priest-assistant. His Lordship preached a sermon on the Nativity of our Blessed Lord. Haydn's Imperial Mass was performed by the choir under the conductorship of Mr. Schacht, in the temporary absence of

Mr. Ward, Miss Knight and Mr. James Jago giving their valuable services. The orchestra had an important addition in the person of Miss K. Dickinson, who had kindly remained in town for the occasion. The “*Adeste Fideles*” was also finely sung. The high altar and sanctuary had been beautifully adorned by the Dominican nuns, who had also erected in a very effective manner the crib, at the door of the baptistery.

We learn that on the feast of Our Lady of Mercy, 24th September, Miss Jane Farrell, of Hokitika, in religion Sister Mary Camillus, was professed a choir nun in the convent of Our Lady of Mercy Singleton, New South Wales.

The death is announced of the famous Arthur McMurrrough Kavanagh, known commonly as Kavanagh of Borris. Kavanagh, a lineal descendant of the arch-traitor McMurrrough, has of late been distinguished as a leading opponent of Home Rule. He has always been remarkable for the malformation of his person, wanting from his birth both legs and arms. Notwithstanding this defect, he was able to take a prominent part in public life, sitting for several sessions in the House of Commons. In private life he was also a man of mark, and possessed many brilliant social qualities. Strange to say, he was a dashing horseman, and in the hunting field held his place in the first flight. He was married, and had a numerous family, none of whom shared his deformity. Indeed, whether rightly or wrongly we do not know, though we do know of a very curious phenomenon in connection with his condition, he was reputed to be the subject of an old prophecy, and, therefore, to fill an exceptional and unique position.

How does this contrast with what takes place at meetings in connection with the popular agitation in Ireland? “*One of the speakers at a meeting in Hyde Park,*” says a cablegram under date London, December 23, “*advocated the murder of the chairman of the Metropolitan Gas Company, and his remarks were received with applause.*” There are agitators, then, who are quite capable of fulfilling the inventions contained in “*Parnellism and Crime.*” It is, however, in the heart of the *Times'* own city that they are found and applauded, and not in Ireland. This is decidedly suggestive.

THE altar of our Lady of Perpetual Succour in St. Joseph's Cathedral, Dunedin, has received a beautiful addition in the shape of a lamp formed of clusters of porcelain flowers, such as have been sent from Paris for display at the Exhibition. The flower represented is that of the hawthorn, and nothing can be more chaste or more tasteful than the design. The lamp is the gift of a lady belonging to the confraternity.

THE Synod of the diocese of Dunedin will commence its session in St. Joseph's Cathedral, on Wednesday, January 15, at 11 a.m.

THE Primrose Dames appear to have deserved some charming compliments from Sir Robert Peel, with respect to the late election for Brighton, at which Sir Robert was defeated. He speaks of them for instance, as the “*filthy witches of the Primrose League who have so foully endeavoured, but in vain, to asperse my character during this contest.*” This is pretty language to be applied to ladies of the highest fashion and it can only be justified by being well deserved. Sir Robert Peel, however, is himself sufficiently initiated into the secrets of high life to know what he is talking about.

WE must take with a grain, or perhaps even an ounce, or indeed a whole pound of salt, the cablegram received this week as to an action for divorce about to be brought by Captain O'Shea against his wife because of her relations towards Mr. Parnell. The report is a stale and stock one, availed of when other means of attempting to discredit the Irish leader are wanting. Not a word so much as hinting at the matter was elicited from Captain O'Shea when he was lately examined before the Parnell Commission, and when he was evidently anxious to give all the adverse testimony possible. Besides Mrs. O'Shea still more recently compelled a London newspaper to apologise to her for some allusion of the kind. The report, therefore, we may accept as originating in those quarters whose elect Sir Robert Peel has just stigmatised as “*filthy witches,*” owing to the foulness of their tongues and their false and unscrupulous attacks on the moral character of an opponent. Perhaps, moreover, it has been judged necessary to raise some scandalous cry as a diversion from the effect produced by the West End Club revelations—whose reflection is on the Tory party and the Primrose habitations.

ONE of the strangest occurrences of the period is the epidemic of influenza now ravaging Europe, and extending even to America. No precautions seem to be proof against it, or certainly it would not attack crowned heads and prominent personages as we are told it is doing. The mortality attendant on it is also remarkable, though, perhaps, we may look upon that of 6 per cent. arrived at in Paris as