

opposed to the present system of education and the Anglicans are opposed to it—in fact the population of the colony are opposed to it, and it only exists by divisions in the different bodies. No doubt the opposition against us is great and people are warned against helping us. The tone of the press is hostile, and anonymous writers attack us. They are afraid to sign their names. Why are they afraid? I find that having failed in argument they are resorting to the "No Popery" cry, as their only means of injuring us. Lord Salisbury is adopting the same tone in England. They fear the public is failing them. Other religions are warned to oppose us and reject the dictation of Bishop Moran; but Bishop Moran is no leader: he wants justice. We have to pay our taxes and have our own schools to keep. We ask no favour; we want our own. People opposed to us are not ashamed to take our money and spend it in educating their children. They have no shame and are determined to continue, so I claim the right as a private citizen to criticise this question in the interests of all, and I find fault with it, as it will be the ruin of the Colony. We are told that if we destroy the present system we will have no system. What folly! No other country is confined to one system. Every nation has several systems. It has been said that I am opposed to education. I am in favour of a proper system of education, for which I have made many sacrifices and have laboured hard. If you ask other people to pay for it they refuse. I rejoice to hear you pledge yourselves in this matter with your Dunedin friends, and I have great hopes that success will crown your efforts.

(By the Special Reporter of the *Southern Standard*).

It was either my fortune or misfortune to be born a Protestant; and my knowledge of Catholics and their religion has been obtained, not from attendances at their Church services, but from social intercourse with individual laymen, and from the perusal of such books on the subject as a Protestant usually reads. I make this avowal, in order to explain my ignorance on the various acts of devotion engaged in when Catholics meet within their churches for the public worship of God.

It fell to my lot to attend at the Church of the Blessed Sacrament, Gore, on Sunday morning, February 21 when, according to announcement, the Bishop of Dunedin (the Right Rev. Dr. Moran) celebrated the Sacrament of Confirmation. On nearing the building it was at once evident that the day was to be a red-letter one for the Catholics in the district. Groups of people were thronging the doors—all sorts and conditions of men, women, and children, and (must I confess it) a sprinkling of people belonging to other denominations—True Blue Presbyterians, and members of the Anglican Church, and others. What struck me forcibly, almost as soon as I was seated in the church (and I had come early), was the mixture of dignity and homeliness that was perceptible. Each one who entered made an obeisance towards the altar, and on reaching a seat knelt down, devoutly crossed himself or herself, and then engaged in silent devotions. This was in strong contrast to the free-and-easy manner which some worshippers enter churches of my own order. It used to be the practice, when I was a boy, for everyone who visited either church or chapel to kneel forward and say a "prayer upon entering church," and afterwards another "prayer before leaving church." The fashion seems to be dying out among the young people in the colonies. Now-a-days, young ladies enter Protestant churches, arrange their dresses carefully as they sit down, give an adjusting touch to their hats or bonnets, and then gaze round the building, to admire or be admired. Young men throw themselves languidly into their seats, and do nothing at all. I have said there was a certain homeliness apparent in the Catholic Church last Sunday. The priests (especially Father Mangan) were most energetic, and unconventional in getting the congregation to seat themselves in the smallest possible space. "Will that good lady please shift up closer to the wall?" was a priest's request at one seat. "Move up, move up, if you please, and allow as many as possible to be seated," was the exhortation given at frequent intervals at all the seats. Unless our ears deceived us, we heard one good Father make covert reference, on one occasion, to the supposed virtue of the use of a "blackthorn stick," in enforcing close packing of the seats. Then there were repeated and anxious enquiries for persons from Wyndham, who had not got their Confirmation tickets. Meanwhile, the confessional was being fully utilised, mainly by young people who were about to be confirmed. As these were so numerous, the choir chamber was also used as a confessional. And still the crowd kept entering the church, and where they all got stowed away was a wonder. The young boys were weeded out of the seats, and made to stand round the altar of the Blessed Virgin in the further corner of the church; forms were brought in and laid along the aisle, and the later comers found standing room near the entrance of the church.

Confessions ceased, however, and a hush fell upon the packed and heated congregation as Father Newport, attired in vestments suitable to the occasion, took his place at the altar, and proceeded, after preliminary prayers in English, with the office of the Mass. On this part of the service, I need not dwell, except to notice the profound devotion of the congregation, the sweet singing of a number of young

girls, who filled the choir chamber, and the by no means unpleasing intoning of the Priest.

There were a few communicants at the Mass, and after it was finished, and the collection taken up, the church was cleared of all but the persons to be confirmed. Those were ranged—the males on the one side of the church, the females on the other. The congregation were again admitted, and the confirmation service proceeded, the Bishop sitting in full canonicals, with mitre on head and pastoral staff in hand. The persons to be confirmed numbered about 120. They were mostly young, but a few were well stricken in years, one old lady being nearly 90 years of age. We may mention that many of these came from Wyndham, and Pukerua, and neighbouring districts.

The Bishop addressed them all as his children. He explained concisely the obligation of man to accept at once and unreservedly all the truths revealed by God. Man must not accept part and reject part. The Church was the repository of God's truth, and was preserved from error by Him. What the Church taught was therefore the truth of God, without any admixture of error. The sacraments were channels which conveyed God's grace to the soul. The Sacrament of Confirmation made men full-grown Christians. Its special object was to make them strong. It had something about it which was very peculiar: it was not only an instrument of grace, but it also contained a Divine Person—they received in it the Holy Ghost; in this it was like the Holy Eucharist. The Bishop spoke with great definiteness of the things required of those who came forward for Confirmation, and the disposition necessary to its worthy reception. The confirmands then came forward two by two, and were duly confirmed by the Bishop, the Rev Fathers Mangan and Coffey assisting.

After the completion of the Confirmation, the persons confirmed engaged in devotions, and the young among them were then dismissed.

The Bishop finally addressed the congregation on the subject of Catholic Education. He impressed upon his hearers the necessity of their bringing up their children, where practicable, in Catholic schools, and regretted that full use had not hitherto been made of those provided in Gore. He was not going to enter fully into this matter that day; but it must continue no longer. He wanted to speak to them first on the importance of their children being educated in Roman Catholic schools, and secondly on the policy they should follow in the future with reference to the election of members of Parliament. He had spoken on this latter subject in several places lately, and to the joy of his heart, those to whom he had spoken had entered into his views, and had pledged themselves to carry them into effect. For 21 years he had carried on an agitation against godless schools. He had not done this from choice, but from duty. The Catholic Church taught, and had always taught, that Catholic children should frequent Catholic schools, and these only. To attend any others was dangerous to their morals; for if faith was lost, all was lost. Catholic parents who passed by Catholic schools, and sent their children to any others, were guilty of great dereliction of duty. The Church could regard such parents in no other light than as Pagans, who had denied the faith, and were worse than infidels. There was no mistake about the Church's teaching: the neglect to send their children to Catholic schools amounted to apostasy on the parent's part. Catholics were bound to do everything in their power to provide schools for their own children. This they were trying to do, notwithstanding their poverty; they had done it, whenever it was possible; and they had not held back from any self-denial. If he had failed to make exertions to provide such schools, he would not have been doing his duty as a Catholic bishop, and his soul would be lost. The bishop then defended himself from the attacks that had been made on him in the Press, because he had expressed his opinion that it was unjust and tyrannical on the part of the State to tax Catholics for the support of godless schools, while it denied them any assistance towards the maintenance of their own schools. Although there had not been much success from their 21 years' agitation, they were about to make progress now. The best men in the colony were coming on to their side. He then referred to Parliamentary election matters, and advised the Catholics to give a block vote for those candidates who pledged themselves to do justice to Catholics in the matter of education. If no candidates in an electorate would so pledge themselves, then let the Catholics stay at home, and refrain from voting. He argued to show that Catholics had nothing to fear from the threat of a block vote on the other side. An immense majority of Presbyterians desired Bible-reading in schools; the Anglican laity desired religious education for their children in the schools. If it was true, that by giving assistance to denominational schools, the Government schools would be deserted (as some of their supporters said), that showed the people were not in favour of them. The Education Act had originally been passed in its present form by a trick, and it only remained unamended, because of the divisions of the Christian sects. It was not liked. The men who got it passed had for their object to destroy the Catholic Church and Christianity; they cared no more for the education of the people than they did for a straw. It was done by members of godless freemason societies. He had been told he was opposed to education! As a matter of fact, he had made every sacrifice for education, and would like a school at every door.

The Bishop closed with an impassioned peroration; and the Benediction having been pronounced, a most impressive service was brought to a close.