

restored, the better. Young girls have no business to be out alone till all hours of the night. The responsibility rests, in the first instance, with the parents themselves, and a firm hand and a kindly control will do much to nip the danger in the bud." Our contemporary goes on to expose a very shocking state of things. "As to the youth of the town," he says, "exposed as they are in many cases to an atmosphere of licentious conversation, it is small wonder that their minds take an evil bias. Fathers of families and men in respectable positions, who, it is to be hoped, would hesitate before committing a more serious breach of morality, have no hesitation in retailing obscene jests and stories within the hearing of young people that they would scorn to utter within the hearing of their own families, and the laughter and applause with which each is greeted induces the awful mistake that it is manlike to revel in obscenity, and to 'sow one's wild oats.' Wild oats will never crop anything but wild oats. Many a lad has been ruined by adopting the plausible doctrines of those miserable cynics who hold that the dirty by-path is the shortest way to a maiden's heart—doctrines which are too often endorsed in a flood of licentious literature, dealing out prurience unmitigated by a single ray of moral light." Our contemporary's conclusion is as follows:—"If men will abstain from public obscenity—if fathers and mothers will keep a more watchful eye upon their sons and daughters, and exercise some supervision of their reading, and if young people themselves will awake to a more ardent sense of their responsibilities as a coming people and as heirs of a noble inheritance, the unenviable notoriety which our fair city has achieved may yet become only a memory of the past." What it is that is to restrain the men from public obscenity, or to awaken the young people to a sense of their responsibilities, our contemporary does not very clearly point out. For our own part, we are, at least, convinced it is not a system of education for which the men are responsible, and to which the young people are subjected, a system which excludes from the schools all mention of the God of the Christian people, and all teaching of religion—the only basis of a sound morality. But the state of things referred to is one of which no account is taken in statistics, and which finds absolutely no place among those bare figures cited recently with much parade by Sir Robert Stout, as conclusive of the excellent effects produced in the colony by the system to which we refer. Concerning all this, moreover, Sir Robert Stout will carefully hold his tongue. His reputation, at least in the respect referred to, as a man of science and a champion of secularism, depends, as it has been gained by him, on his speaking out delusively and with much clamour when the occasion offers, and observing a discreet silence at other times. Over and over again we have published particulars directly contradictory of statements made by Sir Robert Stout in support of secularism and not one word of which he has ever ventured to answer. The humble TABLET perhaps is beneath the notice of a *savant* so profound, and a man so distinguished as Sir Robert Stout. But, at least, the scientific publication which we quoted in complete contradiction of him a week or two ago might deserve his refutation if it were possible for him to undertake it. As an officer of the Grand Orient of France, moreover, he might be expected to explain how the criminality of the country in question, where secularism has of late years been especially predominant has increased within the half century by 133 per cent. This is a statement made by the *Revue des Deux Mondes*—a periodical by no means beneath the notice of Sir Robert Stout. With all due obeisance, we make bold to present Sir Robert with a copy of this number of our paper—most humbly begging him to enlighten us, if possible, by replying to the statements we have mentioned. We do not know whether it would be over-bold on our part also to suggest to Sir Robert Stout that a word from him in explanation of the moral condition of the town of Oamaru might be appropriate as well. It is not for us to assert or deny the dignity of our contemporary the *Oamaru Mail*.

A CANDID  
LEADER.

WE have always believed that, to bring about the concession of justice to Catholics in the matter of education, all that was needful was that a due and unbiassed attention should be given to the subject. Our reliance has constantly been that the sense of right and fair play was too strong among our fellow-colonists to permit of their permanently persisting in a course of oppression and wrong-doing. We have written strongly on the matter, and we have done so, not so much with the intention of reproaching our fellow-colonists with unfair and tyrannous conduct, as of arousing their attention, and forcing them, if we could not persuade them, to consider the question as it really existed. That our efforts have not been in vain many things continue to assure us. In particular, we have now before us a leader published in our contemporary the *Southland Times*, of Tuesday, the 15th inst., and in which the matter of the Bible-in-schools is considered, and the Catholic claim is dealt with at some length. We regret, however, that our contemporary has been misled by a charge which, as he says, and as we perfectly well remember, was recently made in his columns by a correspondent.—"One of our correspondents," he says, "has boldly charged the Bishop with being the real obstructionist to the Bible's being introduced into our primary schools. And he cannot indeed escape the charge of inconsistency in his at

once deploring the godlessness of our system and refusing the entrance into it of what would at once free it from that reproach."—But there is not a word of truth in this correspondent's charge. The Bishop had nothing in the world to do with excluding the Bible from the public schools. When the contents of the Hon Mr Bowen's Bill were first published, the Bishop, on the contrary, called a meeting of Catholics in Dunedin, at which delegates from most parts of the Colony attended, and where his Lordship protested openly against the proposed Act, and declared that neither he nor his people would accept the compromise offered. So rank, indeed, was the language on the occasion that some of our contemporaries accused him of rebellious expressions. If the Legislature persisted in passing the Bill, with the expectation that the Bishop and his people would fail in their pledge, the Bishop could not help that. They simply showed that they knew very little of the man and very little of the nature of Catholic principles. How then is the Bishop accountable for a state of things against which he protested at the outset, and which he has never ceased to condemn? Our contemporary evidently admits that it was not the Bishop's part to advocate the reintroduction of the Bible into the schools. "We do not fail," he says, "to recognise the peculiarity of the Bishop's position. Quite clearly he could not, in harmony with the policy of his Church, sanction the attendance of Roman Catholic children at schools where the Protestant Bible should be read; nor indeed at any school in which the specific dogmas of Roman Catholicism were not strenuously enforced. But why he should desire to exclude the Bible, to the infinite loss of Protestant children and to the secularisation which he so earnestly bewails of the public schools system, is a course of conduct seemingly irreconcilable with his own principles. It is a dog-in-the-manger policy of the most reprehensible kind." But, really, we say again, the dog-in-the-manger policy exists only in the imagination of our contemporary, or rather, perhaps, in that of his correspondent. The Bishop has restricted his protests and his claims altogether to the matter so far as it affects Catholics. He had no more the desire than he had the right of interfering with the members of other denominations. Nay, the Bishop would certainly prefer to see the Protestant people of the colony bringing their children up in the knowledge and practice of Christianity. Our contemporary goes on to state the case for the Catholics, not perhaps quite as we ourselves should state it, but still in a manner with which we can find very little fault. We quote his leader as follows:—"With regard to the Bishop's claim to a capitation grant for the results of purely secular teaching, it is not easy to give a confident deliverance. One thing to be observed is that this is a question entirely distinct from the Protestant claim to have the Bible re-introduced into the common schools—of course always with a conscience clause. The granting of the latter would be nothing gained at the expense of the Catholics; because the common schools are equally closed to the Catholics, with or without the Bible. If the presence of the Bible were to exclude the young members of Bishop Moran's flock from the State schools, then there might arise a valid plea for the equal endowment of Catholic schools. For, while we must recognise the demand for a capitation grant for the latter in one sense as a denominational one, there is another sense in which it differs entirely from a demand that might be made for a separate grant by any of the Protestant Churches. The conscience of the Roman Catholic Church absolutely forbids its children to listen to even the reading, pure and simple, of the Protestant Bible; but the introduction of that Book into the public schools and the reading of it without note or comment would offend the conscience of no Protestant. The Anglican Bishop of Manchester, Dr Moorhouse, is reported to have expressed himself strongly on this point. 'The Roman Catholics,' he has said, 'are asking from us nothing more than what the freest governments in the world have granted to them. In Prussia, in Baden, in our own colony of Canada, and wherever Catholics and Protestants are largely intermingled, the Government has recognised that the peculiar opinions of Roman Catholics have made separate schools for them necessary. The concession of such schools is inevitable. If not granted by our sense of justice, it will sooner or later be wrung from our political necessities. Nor can I look upon the endeavour to starve the Roman Catholic into acceptance of what his soul abhors as a measure of real expediency. Can I forget that Roman Catholics, with all their errors, love my Redeemer, and that, having such love, they are nearer to my heart than the most enlightened Secularist who reviles for disowns Him?' There is a great deal of enlightenment as well as a fine vein of Christian love in these declarations, although they fail to set forth much that is involved in the relative positions of the Roman and Protestant Churches. These opinions of Dr Moorhouse and the sharp distinctions that he draws between the Roman Catholic and all or nearly all other denominations should not be lost sight of in settling this great question of State aid to Catholic schools. It is not fair to say that because one denomination might receive separate aid, every other denomination would have an equal right to demand it. And for the simple reason that in this case one denomination occupies almost a unique position and possesses almost unique claims: It would unquestionably break down the national system of education