

in New Zealand if any denomination could break off at its pleasure from the common school institution, carrying with it a State capitation grant for secular teaching; but it would have no effect whatever in disintegrating the common school system if such grants were made to Roman Catholics only; for in all the localities where the endowments would be sought for there is already an absolute severance between Catholics and Protestants as regards their schools." Our contemporary, in conclusion, bears us out in the views we have more than once expressed as to the true feeling of the people generally towards secularism. "One thing, however," he says, "is tolerably certain. If what the Rev Mr Morley has called 'the divorce of our (education) system from the Bible' is suffered to continue, this will of itself sooner or later produce the result of fatally damaging the integrity of that system. There are unmistakable symptoms that the public conscience is awake in the matter, and that the mind of the community is uneasy under the false step that was taken in excluding the Bible from the schools, and under the already manifest effects of that exclusion and the prospect of their continuance and aggravation. We adhere to the belief that in this particular the action of the Legislature never represented the wishes of the people, and that the evil has been perpetuated not because of any real acquiescence in the wrong on the part of the very large majority, but because of political exigencies that are very well understood. If the mind of the electors could be concentrated on the question at any time of political calm there is little doubt that the response would be largely in favour of the de-secularisation of the public schools. And when so much is said, it is not said in excuse of those who, believing this to be the question of questions as regards the safety and prosperity of the State, yet fail to give it a corresponding place in their political creed and allow the most trifling article of secular policy to dislodge and overshadow it." This leader, as we have said, is plainly an indication that when men who, as our contemporary and the great body of our fellow-colonist certainly are, are at heart lovers of justice and fair play, discard prejudice, cast off the influence of interested or of unscrupulous and dishonest people, and exercise their own independent judgment, they must necessarily see the force and reasonableness of the claims Bishop Moran has so long and so persistently, and, as we believe it will be generally acknowledged in the end, so manfully and faithfully, urged. The Bishop, indeed, has been no dog-in-the-manger. He has truly desired to see impartial justice done to every one, and, what is more, he has never lost faith in the disposition of his fellow-colonists to do such justice when once they perceive how grievously they are involved in withholding it. The leader published by our contemporary, the *Southland Times*, is very significant as to the fact that the Bishop's confidence was well grounded, and that the time in question is no longer far distant.

AUCKLAND.

(From our own Correspondent.)

Auckland, March 17, 1892.

I REGRET to have to announce that the Rev Father O'Gara, one of most popular priests of the Auckland diocese, is to leave for England, proceeding on Saturday next by the Kaikoura. Though Father O'Gara at first proposed to go merely on a holiday trip, it is now probable that he will remain in the old country. Father O'Gara, who is amongst the most kindly and genial of men, is an able Catholic priest, which means, of course, that he is a fearless champion of truth and liberty, while he is a talented scientist, and a member of some of the chief scientific societies of London. He is especially a meteorologist. A man of culture, he is particularly fond of philosophy and its kindred studies. For a considerable period he has been diocesan inspector of the Catholic schools. During the past three years he has been in charge of the Lower Waikato parish.

One of the most flourishing organisations connected with the Church in Auckland is St Patrick's Total Abstinence Society, which, under the guiding care of the worthy president, the Rev Father Hackett, and some of the most prominent members, is advancing surely and steadily. During the term of its existence it has done a great and glorious work. Joy and happiness have, under its influence, been brought into many a home which, before its existence, was desolate and poverty-stricken through the foul demon of drink. It must not be supposed that this society has been established solely for drunkards. Of course its primary object is to rescue souls from so great an evil, but it is a society also which deserves the earnest support and sympathy of everyone, and all of those who are total abstainers, who have never tasted drink, and I am proud to say there are many of them, should become members. The number of members is increasing rapidly, and the meetings are of a most interesting character. However, during the season of Lent the usual concerts will not be held. At a meeting on Friday night, opportunity was taken to show the esteem in which Mr Heffernan, who has done a great deal to advance the interests of this most excellent organisation, is held, Father Hackett, on behalf of the society, presented him with a very handsome silver-mounted pipe, at the same time thanking him for his zeal and energy in the cause they all have so much at

heart. Mr Heffernan, in thanking the members for their gift, said he would continue to work to the best of his ability for the society.

The feast of St Patrick was to have been celebrated in Auckland to-day with usual enthusiasm, but I am sorry to say that as the weather was anything but favourable, for there had been a steady downpour through the night, the demonstration has had to be postponed till Saturday. There is a very amount of patriotic sentiment in Auckland, and it flows over on the 17th of March, when thousands congregate in the Domain, where the Auckland branch of the Hibernian society and the school-children have their annual picnics and sports. This day is observed with more enthusiasm in Auckland than anywhere else in New Zealand. The children march through chief streets, and enjoy themselves in the domain. This evening, however, a national concert, with a programme entirely of Irish music, is to be held, and will, no doubt, attract a crowded audience.

There was a very interesting and touching presentation at the Blind Institute, Parnell, when the patients gave Mr Abbott, through whose efforts the institute was established, an address expressing their thanks and gratitude to him for what he had done on their behalf. It was a sight that would never be forgotten by anyone who saw it—the quiet, hopeless resignation of the patients, as they sat there listening to the addresses, grave and solemn, that beautiful light of the eyes which gives the expression to the face, shut out from them. A little girl—blind, was led forward, and gave Mr Abbott a bunch of beautiful flowers, a token of thanks of the children of the Home. Mr Abbott returned sincere thanks to the patients, and said that the cause of the blind would always be nearest his heart.

Poor old Paul Tuhaere, one of the finest of that fast-decaying race, the Maoris—and a straightforward, honest man, died on Saturday from an attack of acute bronchitis. Throughout his life he had been a staunch friend of European Government in this Colony. He was the head chief of the Ngatwhatua tribe, the original owners of the land on which Auckland is built; and for some years he and a remnant of his tribe have lived at Orakei, a native settlement in one of the bays of the Waitemata Harbour. It was there he died, after having been removed from Auckland against the express instructions of the doctors. Paul's wife survives him, as well as one daughter, Mary Tuhaere, a very intelligent girl, who is receiving an English education.

The sensation of the week has been the collapse of the charge preferred against the Hon J. B. Whyte, conjointly with A. F. Etheridge, of having defrauded the Crown of £103 3s 7d, by substituting land script for cash, which had been paid to the Government by a purchaser of land. When the information was laid against Mr Whyte, there was great astonishment; but the astonishment increased when it was announced on Monday morning that the case could not proceed, owing to the absence of a material witness, Archibald Grandison, a well-known builder, the purchaser of the land. It appears that Grandison was subpoenaed as a witness just as he was leaving Wellington by the Tainui for England, and that he refused to abandon his passage. Long speeches were delivered by counsel, regretting the absence of Grandison, Mr Cooper (Whyte's solicitor) urging that there should be no suggestion that his client had in any sense assisted in the departure of the witness from the Colony. Etheridge, who was sentenced last week to four years' penal servitude on other charges, appeared in court, looking pallid, as if prison life is already beginning to tell on him. He was Receiver of Crown Lands Revenue and Chief Clerk in Lands Department at Auckland for some years. It has now been announced that Mr Whyte intends to ask for a Parliamentary committee to enquire into this case.

The Auckland Catholic Literary Society have opened this year's session with a lecture by Dr Bakewell on "English Puritanism." The lecture was a comprehensive sketch of that system by one who had been brought up amongst its followers, and had afterwards become a Catholic; and it was a critical and impartial statement of the conditions under which Puritanism existed, and the causes of its decline and decadence. Before closing the lecture, Dr Bakewell paid a splendid tribute to the Catholic Church.

The manufacture of salt, an industry which ought to grow into great prominence, is, I am glad to say, about to be established here in earnest, and should develop rapidly. The first definite move in this direction has been taken by a company to be known as the Colonial Salt Manufacturing and Refining Company. They have sent an application to the Rangitoto Domain Board for the lease of five acres of ground on Rangitoto Island, as they wish to establish works there. It will be better to use Rangitoto in that way than to employ the public funds in making a pathway to the top of the Island.

Some improvements and alterations are to be made in the Auckland Telephone Exchange, under the superintendance of Dr Lemon. When the work is complete, more lady telephone clerks will be employed to meet the growing business of this branch of the public service.

The new drill instructor, Sergeant Richardson, who has been sent out to the Colony by the Imperial Government to be attached to the permanent militia, arrived in Auckland a few days ago from the South. He is to make a short stay here, and will return to Wellington early next week.

For general excellence and sterling good value in Dresses, Clothing, Boots and Shoes, Umbrellas, and all sorts of Drapery,

LONARGAN & COMPANY of Casner St., Christchurch, are at the top of the tree.