

## OUR FINANCIAL STATEMENT.



As we have in an especial manner charge of the education system in this country, it now becomes our duty to deliver our financial statement. As this statement will necessarily contain a large number of figures and occupy no little time, we must dispense with much preliminary matter and numerous general considerations, which would be otherwise most interesting. We may, however, venture to congratulate the public on the fact that, notwithstanding numerous enemies and bitter assaults on the essential principle of our education system by law established, it still continues godless as it has been from the beginning—godless in principle, by Act of Parliament, and by administration. Having once advisedly discarded God and Christ in education, and banished them from the school, the public of this country have bravely adhered to their anti-religious principles through all circumstances. This consistency is highly creditable—the consistency of the people in opposition to their Christian traditions. To be sure, at various times attempts have been made in quarters, from which such attempts should be least expected—viz, the ranks of the school teachers, who are paid for other work, to prove that this education system is not godless, but on the contrary, godly. Hitherto, however, all such attempts have proved futile, and have redounded to the discredit of those who made these wild and insane attempts, and all their arguments have been again and again most satisfactorily refuted. Nevertheless, an enthusiastic individual of this class, unmindful of the discomfiture of his fellows, has lately essayed a new argument to prove this cherished system of colonists is not godless. His argument is unique—viz, that cause and effect are taught in Government schools, and that, therefore, they are not what the Act of Parliament and their administrators make them, godless. But it is not necessary in this statement to dwell on this kind of argumentation. The argument does not conclude, inasmuch as the conclusion is not in the premises, and consequently no more need be said upon an argument which is the essence of absurdity. The cost of your system of education, all expenditure considered, amounts to about £500,000 annually, and for this sum you succeed in giving a godless education to about 100,000 children. The papers laid before you will give you exact information on this subject. The education given in secular subjects, as may be seen from the inspectors' reports, is nothing to be very proud of. But this, after all, is only a secondary consideration. The great thing to be secured is the utter godlessness of the system. And this is certainly assured. From time to time efforts have been made by Roman Catholics to introduce into public education an element of religion, but this has been stealthily and successfully resisted, so far at all events. But whilst you are to be congratulated on this successful resistance, the arguments used to defeat the Catholics are not in every instance, at all events, to be commended. For example, it has been said that if Catholics obtained their own money for their own schools, the effect would be that they would establish small schools in remote country places, the expense of maintaining which would be enormous. This argument evidently charges on our school boards, and consequently on Parliament an economic and niggardly spirit, altogether foreign to the policy of both school boards and Parliament. Why, to spread to the uttermost limits of settlement the supreme blessings of godless education, small schools are established in remote parts of all the provinces, the expense of which is very great. For example, in Otago there are 36 schools whose average attendance was 20 and under in February of last year, and there are 20 such schools in Southland, and 80 in Auckland. As a further illustration in Otago, there are two schools where the average attendance was last year only 10 children each, and Government paid for tuition in one of these £124, or more than £12 per pupil, in the other £70, or £7 per pupil. There was one other school the average attendance of which was nine, for whose tuition was paid by Government the sum of £100, and in these instances these payments were in addition to the expenses of sites, buildings, and maintenance. In Auckland there are 12 schools having each an average attendance of 11 children and under. So you see it is not the fear of great expense in remote districts that prevents Parliament from granting to Catholics their own money for the support of their own schools. No, nothing of the sort. Parliament is most anxious, not only to give godless educa-

tion to children regardless of expense, but most desirous to bestow pecuniary benefits and gifts arising from our system as universally as possible. Our school system could be very well and economically worked or administered by one board for the whole country, as is the case in Ireland, or by a minister of education as in other countries, but such a system would not put pickings within reach of many in the various country districts, and our policy is to distribute as widely as possible not only the blessings of education, but also the pecuniary blessings that arise from it. See, for example, how admirably this system works. In Otago, for instance, the local administration of the schools costs considerably beyond two thousand pounds, and there is a similar and proportionate expenditure by all the other schools boards districts. See what an amount of patronage this generosity earns for our system, and how many friends it raises up for it. It is obvious, therefore, that not only policy, but the success of the godless system, depends not a little on this judicious throwing away, it might otherwise be said, of about thirty thousand a year. Catholics have the audacity to say that as they are taxpayers, they are entitled to at least thirty thousand a year for Catholic schools, and here is a source from which the sum could be easily derived. But this is sheer audacity on the part of Catholics. Can it be thought for a moment that New Zealand colonists could so demean themselves as to insult their men of great genius in Dunedin and Auckland, and elsewhere, who are persuaded that the highest proof of exalted intellect and learning is to deny and repudiate all that is at present believed and has always been believed throughout Christendom? Such a thing cannot be thought of for a moment, and no claims of honesty are to be listened to in the presence of such danger. But then it is said that Catholics cannot conscientiously accept a godless system of education, and that they should not be compelled to pay for the free and godless education of other people's children. But such ideas cannot for a moment be entertained by a Minister of Education or a colonial Parliament. What business have ninety thousand Catholics to have a conscience? What presumption! Have they not our colonial conscience to guide them? and as to liberty, have they not such liberty as we Britishers in this land of liberty and fair play for ourselves choose to give them. Conscience indeed! What luxuries to be sure they claim! And, then, is it not the height of presumption in Irish Catholics to complain? If, indeed, these ninety thousand were English Catholics, the case would be different; some consideration might be shown to them. But Irish Catholics. What was the sort of treatment to which they were subjected in their native country? Were they not born with the heel of oppression upon their necks? Were they not compelled not only to pay for the free education of other people's children, but to pay to provide free churches and free burial for other people? And why should such people complain of being subjected to similar disabilities in this land of boasted freedom? Conscience and liberty!! These are old world terms not acclimatised here yet. Oh, this is the favoured land of godlessness, of fads and faddists, of high-falutin' politicians who know how to feather the nests of themselves and their friends, and who never will permit their intellectual giants to be insulted by allowing to Catholics justice, fair play, and impartial treatment.

A REPORT is cabled on the asserted authority of the London *Tablet* to the effect that his Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop of Sydney is suffering from a serious illness at Dublin, and will be obliged to return immediately to a warmer climate. An exaggerated report of a slight indisposition of his Eminence at Rome had previously reached the colonies. Let us hope that something of the kind exists also in the present case.

A MEETING was held in the Garrison Hall, Dunedin, on Monday evening to consider the reconstruction of the local Irish Rifle corps. Captain Hally, who took the chair, explained that the time for recruiting had been extended by the authorities to the 31st August. Colonel Webb and Major Callan were present and an enthusiastic spirit was shown. Steps were inaugurated for beating up recruits, and everything seems to promise a revival of the corps under circumstances to guarantee an efficient and creditable state of discipline for the future. The possibility of a war centring in waters that border on the Pacific, we need hardly add, gives a particular interest to the volunteer question. As things are it seems very necessary for the Colony to hasten and complete its system of defences. Irish colonists we are persuaded will not be backward in fulfilling the duty that devolves upon them in the matter.

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