

lics have done. They have taken the State schools and used them for sixteen years, and they are perfectly satisfied with them. It is not reasonable to suppose, then, that those who have found the State system sufficient all these years will begin to find it insufficient for their wants, merely because Catholics have got a grant. Even if other denominations were to demand a grant, the State would be perfectly justifiable in refusing it, because they cannot, like Catholics, show that they have any reasonable objection to the existing system. The granting of State aid to Catholic schools, instead of weakening the present system, would rather tend to strengthen it, because it would allow a large body of citizens, now excluded, to participate in its benefits, and would tend to make the State system to be in reality what its friends wish it to be, a truly national system of education. An additional benefit, too, would accrue to the schools. The State system, like all other State systems, suffers from want of competition. Now the endowment of Catholic schools would create a wholesome rivalry, and every teacher knows the great value of a healthy rivalry in school work. Schools in the same district would be examined by the same inspector, results would be compared, both classes of schools would strive to attain the highest results, and thus a powerful stimulus would be given to education. The Catholics in New Zealand number about 86,000, or one seventh of the entire population, yet out of the large sum of money voted every year for education, they receive nothing. We are excluded almost entirely from the administration of the Education Act. In the three University Colleges of Dunedin, Christchurch, and Auckland, there is not, so far as I can ascertain, one Catholic Professor. In the secondary or high schools there is not one Catholic teacher, and in the public schools Catholic teachers are represented by one half per cent. Over £400,000 is spent every year on education, and in the disbursement of this large sum we are treated as outcasts and aliens, we receive not one penny, and this in the nineteenth century, and in a free and liberty-loving country. As soon as the present Act became law the Catholics commenced to build their own schools, and these schools have gone on steadily increasing in number ever since. Our own town of Wanganui always had Catholic schools. At first these schools were taught by lay teachers. About thirteen years ago the Sisters of St Joseph came over from Australia to take charge of the Girls' Schools of which there are two, one, the parish school; another, the High school. The Marist Brothers, a religious Order of teachers, will be here shortly to take charge of the boys' school. There has been here a decided advance with the times during the last thirteen years, and the number of pupils has also increased. It is the same in the adjacent districts, Palmerston North and Hawera. Both have convents and boys' schools. It is the same in every other part of the Colony. In all the large centres there are convents which are, like the convent in Wanganui, High schools for girls. In Wellington we have St Patrick's College. In other large centres we have High schools for boys. In any town of any importance we have parish schools for boys as well as the girls' schools taught by the Nuns. The sum of money spent by us for sites and for buildings is very great. I regret I am not able to give the exact figures, and the annual expenditure for maintenance is also a large one. The costs of sites and buildings in the diocese of Christchurch alone, up to about two years ago, was £55,000, and the expenditure has increased since then. There are 3 other Catholic dioceses, and in each the expenditure has been equally large. The number of children attending our schools is 13,000, and if we were to send them to the State schools it would cost the Colony £40,000 to educate them. This sum we save the Colony by our devotion and earnestness in the cause of education. Surely our convictions must be sincere when we make such sacrifices to support them. Our schools are equal in efficiency to the State schools, and in many instances superior to them. Of the Wanganui Convent School I can speak with confidence, having taken part in the Christmas examinations for several years past. Of the local boys' school I can say this, that it is now under the charge of a gentleman who for several years in Nelson gained the most favourable reports under the examination of Mr Hodgson, the Government inspector for the Nelson Education Board. One very marked proof of the efficiency of our schools is the fact that they are largely attended by children of non-Catholic parents who cannot be actuated by any religious preference for them. What, then, do we ask for from the State? We ask that our own money be given us for our own schools. But we ask that money only on this condition: that we first satisfy the State that we are imparting the same secular knowledge which is imparted to pupils attending the Government schools. And as to the degree of this secular knowledge, and as to our methods of imparting it, we say the State's officer, the Government inspector of schools for the district, should be the judge. We do not want to take the public money and spend it in maintaining schools which are not up to the standard of efficiency required by the State; on the contrary, we are prepared to satisfy every requirement of the State as to secular instruction, and we are prepared to abide by the decision of the Government inspectors. If our schools do not satisfy the inspectors, we are prepared to forgo our grant. And if, in addition to doing all that the State requires in our schools, we, for the sake of our own consciences, do something more than the State requires, who can

complain? Our claim is a reasonable and a just one. We do not wish to interfere with those who believe in the secular system and use it, we merely ask that justice be done to ourselves.

CONVENT CONCERT AT GREYMOUTH.

(Grey Evening Star, July 8.)

DESPITE the counter attraction at the Drilled last evening, the entertainment given by the pupils of the Convent High School was well attended. The programme, consisting of vocal and instrumental music, dramatic productions, etc., was well received by the audience, frequent rounds of applause greeting the performers. The instrumental music and histrionic powers displayed by the pupils deserve special mention. The acting of some of the pupils being quite on a par with professionals. The tambourine Drill—for the first time seen in Greymouth—was a treat to be remembered, the twelve pupils taking part going through the various movements gracefully, and with the precision of clockwork. The singing class did good service throughout the evening, and one of their choruses, rendered in fine style, brought a most enjoyable entertainment to a close. On the whole, the performance speaks volumes for the careful and intelligent instruction the pupils are receiving at the hands of their good tutors.

THE LATE MR ALEXANDER MACDONALD.

(Inverness Scottish Highlander.)

THE death of Mr Alexander Macdonald, wine merchant, which took place after a lengthened illness on Friday afternoon, May 12, removes another of the links connecting the Highland capital with a past generation. Passing away at the advanced age of 87 years, Mr Macdonald had throughout his whole life enjoyed the esteem of his friends and merited the confidence and goodwill of the entire community. He was a man of gentle and kindly temperament, sociable to a degree, and uniformly upright and honourable in all his business relations. It was only natural that this should be so. Mr Macdonald came of a good old Highland stock. He was the second surviving son of John Macdonald, XI, of Glanalladale, a cadet family of Clanranald, brother of Angus Macdonald, XII of Glanalladale, who died in 1870, and uncle of Colonel Macdonald, XIII, and now of Glanalladale, of the present Catholic Archbishop of Scotland, and of Bishop Macdonald, now of Aberdeen. Born at Borrodale in 1806, he was educated at Marischal College, Aberdeen, and in early life was apprenticed to a firm of Glasgow writers. In 1832 he took an active part in the first election under the Reform Act, being in practice as a writer in Glasgow at the time. He, however, relinquished the law, and became factor to Lord Lovat in 1840—an appointment he held for nine years. Mr Macdonald was very popular with the Lovat tenantry, and on his retirement they presented him with a valuable barometer and a splendid silver claret jug. Coming to Inverness, he started in business as a wine merchant in Castle street. He afterwards removed to High street, where he remained till 1883, when he became a tenant on the property of his son, Mr Andrew Macdonald, solicitor, in premises in Church street, where the business is at present carried on by Mr J. P. Elgin, who now becomes the sole partner of the firm. Mr Macdonald was also engaged in other business enterprises, but that already named was the one with which his name will continue to be associated. Like all good citizens, Mr Macdonald found time to devote a portion of his business talents to the public service, and, entering the School Board as one of the original members, he remained there for a period of six years. He was also a member of the Parochial Board, where his quiet and kindly influence had a considerable effect in ameliorating the condition of the unfortunate class concerned. Mr Macdonald's wife died in 1891, five years after the celebration of their golden wedding, and this, it is believed, had a depressing effect upon the old gentleman's spirits.

An enthusiastic member of the Roman Catholic Church, the funeral service conducted in the Chapel of St Mary on Tuesday was probably the most elaborate and impressive ceremonial of the kind conducted in Inverness since the Reformation. The *Requiem* Mass was sung by the nephew of the deceased, the Most Rev Archbishop Macdonald, of St Andrews and Edinburgh, assisted by the Very Reverend Aneas Canon Chisholm, rector of Blair's College, Aberdeen, as deacon; the Rev Alex. Bisset, Nairn, as subdeacon; and the Rev David Macdonald, Stratherrick, as assistant priest. Rev Father Columba, Fort Augustus, was master of ceremonies. Bishop Macdonald, Aberdeen (another nephew of the deceased), occupied a seat in the sanctuary. The following clergy were also present:—Reverend Father Macquae, Inverness; Rev Canon Weir, Fochabers; Rev Canon Cameron, Beaulieu; Rev Alexander Bisset, Marydale; Rev Dean Macrae, Eskdale; and Rev J. J. Dawson, Oban. The Prior of Fort Augustus Abbey was also present, along with several of the monks, who composed the choir. On the termination of Mass absolutions were given by the Archbishop. The clergy then formed themselves into processional order, and, preceded by the cross-