

these people explained away the fact that every second of our lives lessons in morality were being taught us in the school of Nature—a school, too, whose discipline was certainly not godless, for the Creator Himself was the founder thereof." Nevertheless, we were the other day introduced to a pupil of the school, a man who had spent a great part of his life in a study of the course and works of Nature in the forests of Africa—a hunter to whose experiences we referred also in a late issue—and he, for example, had derived from the lessons he had received the convictions of a profound pessimism. Why should other pupils necessarily fare better than he? Mr Whetter, however, holds denominationalists in supreme contempt. He denies that they have a knowledge even of what morality essentially is. He himself, meantime, knows all about it, as perhaps we might expect. "Morality, it had been said, was the art, or science, of consequences—actions being good or bad according to the goodness or badness of their results." Let us do evil then that good may come, for the end justifies the means. Still it must be acknowledged that our dominie has some notion of how to go about it in a professional way. "If they would make a child moral they must give his brain, his nerves, and his muscles a keen memory for pain and pleasure, for by these two things would his moral course be directed." Decidedly let his morals be impressed through the medium of his nerves and muscles. Great indeed are the virtues of the tawse—and most effectual no doubt the efforts of a dominie believing as Mr Whetter says he believes, that "in order to be moral a man must cultivate a keen memory for consequences." "Mr Whetter," the report tells us, "proceeded to quote largely from New Zealand statistics with a view of showing that crime had decreased since the present system of education was initiated." It would be interesting to learn if, for instance, he added to his diminished quotations the decreased birth-rate of the colony, with the particular significance attached to it? Another "drop" into philosophy concluded the paper—a "drop" so deep that we hesitate to follow it, lest, like the author, we should get out of our depth and flounder in the slough of the incomprehensible. But, we say again, Mr Davidson is a gentleman easy to satisfy, and eke of a sanguine spirit. "A guardian of our national system of

mountain and showed him the splendours of the earth; but the incorruptible soul of the eternally young man of the Vatican despised the gifts and distrusted the promises. He has embraced for ever "the cause of the insulted and the humiliated," in the language of Costoleffsky, the cause of the future democracy, progress and liberty. The struggle between the Church and the Empire was renewed in Rome, and was decided in a few moments. The tiara was not lowered before the sceptre."

Wars and rumours of wars are still characteristics of our age of peace. But whether anything more serious is to come of the existing quarrel between the French and the Siamese it is not easy to say. The probabilities may be that the matter will spread no further. There are, however, at the same time possibilities that a good deal more may come of it. There are, for example, several points on which France has been for some time sore against England. There are questions relative to Egypt, Newfoundland, and Madagascar, as well as to Siam itself, on which French feeling has been irritated. Neither country, besides, can afford the least sacrifice of prestige in any part of the East. There is a tendency towards an alliance between China and Siam—a tendency, also, towards hostility between China and Russia, and there is an alliance actually formed, if we may believe rumour, between Russia and France. During the visit of the Emperor William to Rome, indeed, this alliance was understood to be indirectly but rather defiantly proclaimed in his Majesty's presence. The occurrence took place at a dinner at the palace of the Quirinal, where King Humbert had made a speech, welcoming his Imperial visitors. The King spoke in French, but the Emperor significantly replied in German. The lull that ensued was broken by the voice of the Russian ambassador, who took up his glass, with a bow to the wife of the French ambassador. "Madame," he said, "I drink to your great country."—What, therefore, may come out of all this it is hard to say. There are, however, as we see, many points on which sinister results are not impossible.

If the majority of the school committee at Westport are virtuous in no other respect, they are at least consistent. They evidently do not believe in diluting the godless system which they administer

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education," as he calls Mr Whetter, basing his system of morals, as Mr Whetter does, on a "keen memory for consequences," is a cheap enough sort of champion, and the fight for denominationalism must needs be feeble that could be overcome by figures quite incapable of proving the point at issue.

SPECULATION as to the recent visit paid by the ODDS AND ENDS, Emperor William to the Pope still continues rife.

What was manifest from the first was that the Emperor went to Rome merely making use as a pretext of the celebration of the silver wedding, but with the true object of having a personal interview with the Pope. Everything was done by him to give distinction to his visit. State carriages had even been brought from Germany expressly for the purpose, and no outward acknowledgment of the Pope's sovereign standing was omitted. It is, nevertheless, generally agreed that the Emperor's intention was not that of seeking the interference of his Holiness in any question relating internally to Germany—not even in that of the Army Bill on whose passing he was so intent. The conclusion arrived at in certain non-Catholic quarters that are accredited with especial reliability is that the object was to obtain the support of the Pope for Monarchy as opposed to Republicanism and to appeal to the Papacy as a great conservative force. The Pope, however, we are told, remained steadfast, refusing to pledge himself to the support of any particular form of government or to oppose any hindrance to the growth of democratic institutions. As a further proof of the Emperor's design his extreme deference to Cardinal Ledohowski, the distinguished victim of the May Laws, but now the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda, is cited. The object of this is said to have been the inducement of his Eminence to aid in undermining the influence of France in the East where, as is well known, the missions under her protection give her an exceptional advantage. An additional glory in fact, is said to have been reflected on the august prisoner of the Vatican as a result of the Imperial visit. Surrounded as he was by the strength of the Triple Alliance he turned away resolutely from the temptations offered by its head. "The tempter transported the Pontiff upon the

with a little colourless pretence of religion. They have refused the use of their school-house to certain ministers and teachers requesting permission to give religious instruction there after school hours. But what we should like to inquire is, why, if "all scripture is given by inspiration of God," as doubtless these teachers and ministers admit, they are nevertheless authorised to pick and choose as to particular passages for teaching purposes. For half-an-hour, once a week, these ministers and teachers would teach the "Lord's Prayer the Beatitudes, and the ten commandments, one or two of the better known Psalms, and one of the Gospels, together with certain lives from the Old Testament." But what should determine the selection or where is the authority for it? It must be admitted, however, that an extreme modesty is shown with regard to time. "Bible-reading and explanation, prayer and hymn singing," all in half an hour once a week! Could any body of religious men possibly aspire to less? They could hardly get the burden more briefly off their consciences. As to the refusal of the committee, we fancy it was illegal. But that is neither here nor there. As the administrators of a godless system they acted consistently, and we should not be surprised if their reply afforded something like a relief to their rev and pious petitioners. Possibly the majority of the committee are right as well as consistent. Open godlessness, at least, is more honest than a pretence of piety.

Our contemporary the *Southland News* is the prohibitionist's at defiance with regard to the state of things in North Invercargill. Notwithstanding the withholding of licences, he gives us to understand the depravity of man still continues to be manifested in the borough. There are larrikinism and sly-grog selling—and rather an increase of drunkenness. Last, though perhaps not least, the local rates have been raised 6s in the pound. As to a case mentioned by our contemporary, in which a widow lady who had paid £800 for a hotel, was obliged to sell the house for £250, it hardly seems pertinent. At least, the charitable prohibitionist would probably argue that it served her right. It should be disappointing, meantime, to find that prohibitionists had not the power to reform the world to which, as a general rule, they pretend. But if

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