

MARRIAGE.

THORNTON—KAVENEY.—On January 13, 1901, John Thornton, Scott's Gap, Otautau, to Mary, daughter of the late John Kaveney, Strathmore, Otautau.

DEATH

WARD.—On 22nd August, at Timaru, Dorothy Margaret Alacoque, third daughter of W. T. and M. Ward, of Roslyn, Dunedin; aged 8 years.—R.I.P.

IN MEMORIAM

WARD.—In memory of Francis, second son of W. T. and M. Ward, who died at Russell street, Dunedin, on 22nd August, 1892; aged 6 months.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

CATHOLIC MOTHER.—We are unable to find space for poetry, however excellent it may be.

E.J.G. (South Dunedin).—No regular agent in New Zealand. Could order through any leading bookseller here, or direct from office, Princes street, Dublin.



To promote the cause of Religion and Justice by the ways of Truth and Peace.

LEO. XIII. to the N.Z. TABLET

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1904.

A DEPUTATION AND ITS LESSONS

SOME animals play, in attack, a game of bluff. It takes, most commonly, the simulated appearance of a certain portentous bulk, intended to create the impression of a physical force that is not really present. The work of a noted entomologist gives many droll photographic examples in point from the insect world. The erect hair and fur of some animals and the arched back and tail of 'the harmless, necessary cat' ('the arch enemy,' as Hood calls it) are familiar instances from the lower mammalian world. Russia's threatening bluster about her thundering legions, a million strong, represents the same old policy of bluff in the lord of creation. Of the same order was the first and middle and final argument of the Bible-in-schools Conference when they advanced to the attack of the rights of conscience of other creeds in New Zealand. It was the bluff of numbers and brute force—a paean of 'whelming odds, of 'eighty per cent. of the population' marching at their back, with hearts, like those of the 'lovers true' of St. Valentine's day, 'beating as one' in a 'wonderful unanimity.' It was the audacious braggadocio of Bombastes or Bobadil. It served, however, one useful purpose. It added to the nation's gaiety in dull grey days when nothing else was happening. For the rest, the game of bluff failed to impress the big public who were awake enough to witness—in the public press (secular and religious), and in the meetings of Councils of the Churches and similar organisations—the storms that cross and rend the 'wonderful unanimity' of the mythical 'eighty per cent.'

Last week another charge of gelignite still further shattered the riven fragments of the 'eighty per cent.' It was a deputation to the Premier (reported elsewhere in this issue) on the Bible-in-schools scheme. The deputation consisted wholly of non-Catholic clergy and laymen, differing widely (as their principal spokesmen remarked) 'on political, ecclesiastical, and theological questions, but they all considered the proposals made by the Bible-in-schools Conference to be objectionable.' Briefly stated, their grounds of objection were the

following: That questions of religion are outside the province of the Civil Government; that the new scheme is an attempt to make the Administration a religious teacher; that the deputationists object to 'paying for religious instruction from taxation imposed on all classes of the people'; that the Bible-in-schools scheme would be an injustice to teachers; that it 'might land us in a State Church'; that a matter of conscience, such as this, should not be submitted to a plebiscite; but that, if it was to be put to a majority vote, it should be on a clear and proper issue, and one very different from that proposed by the Wellington Conference.

The position taken up by the deputation is a benediction, from various points of the non-Catholic compass, on the pronouncements of our Hierarchy. It is gratifying to find such real unanimity on so grave a question among persons of such widely diverse and even opposite views on many other social, political, and religious questions. The deadly sin of Mr. Seddon's reply was his re-statement of the anti-democratic principle that questions of conscience, like questions of tramway loans, may be settled by a count of polls, and that a majority has the right to 'bail up' a minority and compel them, at the pistol-muzzle of legal compulsion, to deliver their purse to pay for the teaching of a form of religion to which the victims of this Dick Turpin school of statecraft object. Apart from this, there was a great deal of sweet reasonableness in the Premier's reply, to which our readers are referred. At the close, he planted a shell in the Bible-in-schools Conference's hull where its only armor-plate was a piece of transparent tissue-paper. He reminded them of their gross and flagrant neglect of the opportunities for religious instruction afforded under the provisions of the present Education Act. Mr. Seddon was speaking by the book, having before his mind's eye the following official table which he, as Minister of Education, had presented to the House of Representatives on November 2, 1903:—

Education District.	Number of Schools open at end of 1902.		Number of Schools in which Religious Instruction is given.		RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.																	
	Total.	Church of England.	Total.	Church of England.	Church of England.	Catholic.	Methodist.	Baptist.	Congregational.	Salvation Army.	Church of Christ.	Total.	Church of England.	Catholic.	Methodist.	Baptist.	Congregational.	Salvation Army.	Church of Christ.	Total.		
Auckland	414	27	2	1	2	6	3	1	1	1	1	14	2	4	5	2	1	1	1	6	21	35
Taranaki	71	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Wanganui	155	14	13	2	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	26	2	4	5	2	1	1	1	6	2	23
Wellington	149	10	6	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	14
Hawke's Bay	77	9	5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	11	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	13
Marlborough	60	9	5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	11	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	13
Nelson	122	9	5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	11	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	13
Grey	31	9	5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	11	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	13
Westland	33	9	5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	11	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	13
North Canterbury	207	41	27	4	12	14	12	14	14	14	14	45	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	11	56
South Canterbury	71	18	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	14	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	5	19
Otago	214	23	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	13	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	12	25
Southland	150	13	57	32	38	16	2	2	2	2	2	150	22	17	5	2	1	1	1	7	56	206
Totals	1,754	156	57	32	38	16	2	2	2	2	2	150	22	17	5	2	1	1	1	7	56	206