

tors. The Act at present provides that scholarships shall be tenable at State secondary schools or at an 'approved equivalent,' and it is rather difficult to see why the council should have been consulted at all in the matter. No doubt this is one of the subjects on which the Minister himself 'has decided opinions,' and there is little reason to suppose that the council's recommendations on this point will be taken at all seriously.

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Regarding free places, we are told that the council unanimously passed the following motion:—'That free places be not tenable at private schools.' The unanimity is quite touching—'Great is Diana of the Ephesians!' No reason is offered for this intolerant discrimination—the council is content baldly and shamelessly to declare that Catholic taxpayers should be compelled to pay for the maintenance of these free places, but that their children—unless they are prepared to violate the dictates of their conscience and the precepts of their religion—are not to be allowed to derive any benefit from them. The members of the council may be, and presumably are, experts on purely educational questions—on questions of justice and principle they are clearly very rickety and unreliable guides.

Notes

The Best Joke

The cabled accounts of the despatch of 'Ford's Ar.' make it tolerably clear that the movers in the enterprise are people with a good deal more money than sense. The incident has, however, produced at least one good joke. 'Mr. Ford,' says one of the recent cables, 'has published with the utmost solemnity the best joke of the peace mission. It consists of a long telegram to the Pope, asking for his good-will and co-operation. It was addressed "Benedict VII." Later, Mr. Ford learned that Benedict VII. died in the year 993.'

The Religions of the Tenth

The religions of the Tenth Reinforcements (2609 men) are shown in the following table:—

	No.	P.C.
Church of England	1244	47.68
Presbyterian	663	25.41
Roman Catholic	409	15.67
Methodist	189	7.24
Baptist	52	1.99
Salvation Army	11	.42
Miscellaneous	41	1.57

Three have stated their religion as 'nil,' there is one solitary agnostic, and one who is willing to be entered under 'any religion.' The Catholic proportion of population is, roughly, 14 per cent.

Alleged Shirkers

Another of those stupid anti-Irish cables the publication of which, especially at the present juncture, calls for the most vehement protest, appeared in our dailies last week. It was dated San Francisco, December 2, and was in these terms:—'A party of 70 Irishmen has arrived here from New Zealand. They admitted they left because they were afraid of conscription. Mr. P. T. Sullivan said that in order to escape the New Zealand officials the party pretended they were going to England to enlist, while they really intended to make their homes in California.'

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Naturally, the publication of such an absurd and unfounded statement aroused considerable indignation, and at a meeting of representative Irishmen held in Wellington it was unanimously resolved that statements such as those cabled from San Francisco to the effect that a party of Irishmen left New Zealand to escape

conscription ought not to be published at the present time, when the unity of all nations of the Empire is pre-eminently to be desired. The feeling in Irish circles in Wellington, and the probable facts regarding the incident, are thus indicated by the Wellington correspondent of the *Otago Daily Times*: 'The message was apparently built up out of the loquacity of one Irishman, and the imagination, perhaps, of an American newspaper man. In the first place, as prominent Wellington Irishmen argue, there was no party of Irishmen on the Moana. It may be true that men left on the Moana to evade their proper duty of defending the Empire, but to say that they constituted "a party" and to infer thereby that it was an organised affair among the Irish is wrong. It is not true that there were 70 Irishmen on the ship. There were in all some 50 persons about whose motives for leaving there can be suspicions. Among these were 30 men with Irish names, and there is no evidence that many of these had not good reasons for leaving. Two men, at least, named McGrath, had come to New Zealand only a few weeks previously, and their original intention, which they carried out, was to go to California. It is argued with some justification that Irishmen all over the Empire have not been failing in their duty to the Empire, that in Wellington every daily list of recruits published contains Irish names, and that in patriotic work here Irish men and women have taken an active part. They take strong exception to the publication of messages insulting the nation generally at a time when the unity of all the peoples of the Empire matters so much, and they suggest also that just as there are doubtless Irishmen who are laggards, there are also laggards amongst Englishmen, Scotchmen, and colonials.'

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

His Lordship the Bishop will administer the Sacrament of Confirmation in St. Joseph's Cathedral on Sunday afternoon at half-past two o'clock.

The retreat of the Little Sisters of the Poor, which was conducted by the Rev. Father O'Sullivan, C.S.S.R., concluded on Wednesday morning, after which Father O'Sullivan left for the north.

On Sunday there was Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at St. Joseph's Cathedral from the last Mass until after Vespers, when the usual procession, followed by Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, took place.

A collection by direction of his Lordship the Bishop will be made in the churches of the diocese on Sunday in aid of the funds for the erection of a hall at the military camp at Tauherenikau for Catholic soldiers. Mass will be celebrated in the hall on Sundays, and on week days it will be used for social purposes.

On Wednesday (the feast of the Immaculate Conception), there were Masses at 6.30, 7, and 8 o'clock at St. Joseph's Cathedral. Mass was celebrated at 7 o'clock at the Church of the Sacred Heart, North-east Valley, and 9 o'clock at the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Kaikorai. There was First Communion of a number of children at the Cathedral, and also at the suburban churches of the parish.

The students of St. Philomena's College will celebrate the close of their scholastic year by giving an entertainment in St. Patrick's School Hall, South Dunedin, on Wednesday evening, December 15. The programme will consist of, among other items, action songs, choruses, pianoforte items, orchestral selections, an extravaganza, and a comedy. The programme is of such a character that it will give an opportunity to the students to display their varied accomplishments, and the progress which they have made during the past twelve months.

The arrangements for the fete in St. Dominic's Priory on Saturday afternoon, in aid of Father Bans' Belgian Fund, are now almost completed, and everything promises that it will be most successful. There will be several attractions, including out-door games