

These latter rights are undoubtedly provided for in the Education Act, but were refused by the Government under a subterfuge. The National Government refused us recognition on the ground that to concede what we want would be inconsistent with the principles of 'free, secular, and compulsory' education, and would ultimately burst up our National education system. Let us analyse what the refusal to allow scholarship pupils to go to a Catholic school at a distance means. The Government say that such pupils should not pass a Government High School to go to a Catholic secondary school. Now we know that the primary schools aim at uniformity in teaching, but surely specialisation should be sought for in secondary schools. Many State high schools very properly aim at specialisation in many subjects. If a school does this the present system instead of encouraging it apparently tries to do such a school an injury. The Government regulations are designed to prevent those who might desire the special course from going first to one school to take advantage of it. It would be well that High School Boards of Government should do this. Why should not the State high schools be able according to circumstances to have those who have a special science or other special course, or a special course of languages, or a special course of drawing, within their walls, or to give a special place of residence, who are content to be in the one of other of these branches of study. The public schools of England have always been the specialised systems. Why should we object to have a valuable part of ourselves. The Government object of this kind, Catholic secondary schools, and that they ought to, as special courses, to be given to a class of pupils, and should be granted to those who either as a help or as a special course, wish to take the special course. A Catholic representative that private schools of this kind should be entitled to representation on the Education Board of New Zealand, the Government refuse to do so on the ground that such representative might exercise some influence on the public schools, which we did not accept. So far as the Education Board of New Zealand is concerned, representing every denomination of the population in New Zealand, and as the Government are not according to the Government that such a body should be influenced by a Catholic representative. We are told that Catholics are entitled to a voice in the management of our education system, and that we are to have an opinion through the various bodies connected with its administration, but here we lose a Member of Parliament that such a voice would be in vain.

It has been stated that if our claims were granted it would have the effect of bursting up our National system of education. Let us examine the facts:—The 'scholarship' and 'free place' concessions which we ask in no way affect primary education, and therefore the granting of them would not have the slightest effect upon that system. So far as the 'free, secular, and compulsory' business is concerned, apparently these principles do not apply to the secondary schools at all. I don't think any of the Government secondary schools are strictly secular. I think I am right in saying that nearly all, if not the whole of them, have Bible-reading and prayers during school hours.

The principle of secularity is therefore tacitly waived by the Education Department. No 'compulsion' is used as regards secondary schools, nor are they 'free' except to scholarship or free place pupils. It is clear, therefore, that none of the cardinal principles of our public school system would be affected by the granting of what we ask. As regards 'medical inspection' and 'swimming classes,' neither of these are strictly education matters at all. They are only connected with the schools for convenience and not because public health and physical efficiency properly belong to the Department of Education. The truth is, ladies and gentlemen, the Government's politics are too narrow and one-sided to be worthy of a truly National Cabinet. Catholics are apparently good enough in

their eyes to spend their bodies and energies in the defence of the State; they are good enough to be made to pay taxes, but they apparently are not worth considering when the Government dispenses administrative favors to the public. After all, perhaps we have ourselves to blame. For nearly forty years we have quietly submitted to the injustice of being 'robbed' by the Government of this country because of our religious convictions. We have permitted ourselves to be walked on because we have lacked the spirit to decline being made door-mats of. We know the Government can be made to recognise the power of religious convictions at times. We saw only last session that Quakers were exempted from active combatant service because of their objection to war. If the State in its present emergency can recognise the 'consciences' of a few hundred Quakers, surely it can be made to recognise them in respect of 150,000 Catholics in the matter of education.

The Catholic ideal of education is absolutely opposed to that of the upholders of our present public system. We insist upon the principles of religion being inculcated in our young people by ourselves. We do not despise secular instruction, but will not have it divorced from religion. Our position is daily becoming more and more appreciated by other denominations—Presbyterians, Anglicans, and others are beginning to see the wisdom of establishing secondary schools of their own if they wish to preserve the existence of their Churches. All honor to them for doing this. Catholics can fully enter into their desires, their whole attitude towards these new schools is a vindication of the Catholic position. In asking for recognition of private secondary schools for scholarship and free place holders we are fighting their battles as well as our own. Even the Bible-in-schools movement is its very basis a recognition of the Catholic principle that religious and secular instruction should not be separated. The difference between us and that party was that they wished the State to teach their particular 'text' while we decline to recognise the right of the State to teach religion at all. Our ideals are for the State to assist all persons in educating their children in secular matters, leaving the parents free to choose and pay for such religious instruction as they may desire. What matters it to the State as to where the secular instruction is given so long as it is equal to the Government standard. We claim to be a democracy, which if anything surely means the right of the people to govern themselves. If as is claimed by the Government the recognition of private schools would have the effect of withdrawing the children from the State schools and thus breaking up the public system, surely that implies that the public are dissatisfied with the present system, and, if so, as a democratic and free people they are entitled to have a system that suits their requirements. The remedy for this injustice that lies in our power is to educate the general public through the Catholic Federation. The reply of the Government to the late deputation in Wellington is already bearing fruit. Every Federation centre is out to increase its membership. Wellington started a campaign to obtain 5000 new members, and were so successful in the first efforts that they increased their total to 10,000 new members. Auckland is out after 5000 new members, with great prospects of success; Christchurch and Dunedin are also going strong. If we can double the total members of the Federation we will have reason to thank the Government for its attitude towards us. With proper organisation our claims will be irresistible. There is nothing like power behind a request to make it effective. The surest guarantee of peace is thoroughness in our preparedness for war. We want to make the people think, and through them the Government. Most of us have heard the story of the man who when on a journey was caught in a shower of rain. He looked around for a place to shelter, but the only place that he could see was a hollow log on the roadside. He crept inside and felt happy, thought he was safe, and blessed the shelter afforded him by his refuge. When the rain cleared off, he thought to pursue his journey. He, however,