

DEATH

GALLAGHER.—On February 1, 1911, at Westport, Hanfah, the beloved wife of F. Gallagher, and third daughter of Mr. and Mrs. M. Scannell, Ma Waro; aged 21 years 9 months; deeply regretted.—R.I.P.

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THE LATEST 'TABLET' PUBLICATION

'Secular versus Religious Education: A Discussion.' Edited (and, as to its greatest part, written) by Rev. H. W. Cleary, D.D. 212 pages, stiff paper wrapper. Price 1/-, posted 1s 3d. Cardinal Moran writes of it: 'I have received the brilliant pamphlet, *Secular versus Religious Education*. It is a most useful and instructive contribution to the educational controversy, and cannot fail to do a deal of good.'

Apply MANAGER, TABLET, Dunedin.

MESSAGE OF POPE LEO XIII. TO THE N.Z. TABLET.

Fergant Directores et Scriptores New Zealand Tablet, Apostolica Benedictione confortati, Religionis et Justitiæ causam promovere per vias Veritatis et Pacis.

Die 4 Aprilis, 1900.

LEO XIII., P.M.

TRANSLATION.—Fortified by the Apostolic Blessing, let the Directors and Writers of the New Zealand Tablet continue to promote the cause of Religion and Justice by the ways of Truth and Peace.

April 4, 1900.

LEO XIII., Pope.



THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1911.

MR. H. G. ELL, M.P., ON THE EDUCATION QUESTION



HERE was a time when Mr. H. G. Ell, M.P., was regarded as a politician with a future before him. Beyond the circle of his own constituents he was known as the author of a widely-circulated pamphlet on the question of establishing a State Bank of issue in New Zealand. He was the founder of a once flourishing Referendum League—now defunct. He was, if we remember rightly, a member of the famous 'Left Wing' party, which in its inception gave promise—unhappily belied by its brief and somewhat inglorious career—of some sort of independence of thought and action in political affairs. By painstaking industry in the collection of facts and statistics, he made himself probably the best-informed authority in New Zealand on the Rating

On Improved Values question. Altogether, those of us who were not personally acquainted with the member for Christchurch South, had some reason to regard him as at least a man of ability, of more than ordinarily progressive tendencies, and of sufficient receptivity of mind to enable him to take a reasonably broad outlook on the more important questions with which he might have to deal.

On Sunday of last week it was our fortune to hear Mr. Ell in *propria persona*, and those who, like ourselves, had formed a somewhat high opinion of that gentleman, will hardly realise the disappointment that was in store for us. 'What a fall was there, my countrymen!' Of all the speeches delivered at the gathering in question, Mr. Ell's stands out in ignoble relief—as crude in conception, tactless in execution, and absolutely schoolboyish in matter and form. The occasion was the opening of St. Bede's Collegiate School, Christchurch; and Bishop Grimes, in his opening remarks, had voiced a spirited and eloquent protest against the injustice with which both primary and secondary Catholic schools were treated by the State. In proof of that injustice, and as showing the enormous sums saved to the State by the existence of the Catholic school system, his Lordship gave the following telling summary of irrefutable facts and figures:—'In the Catholic primary schools of the Dominion there were 12,000 pupils, who, if they attended the State schools would cost the State an additional £52,800 per annum on the basis of £4 8s per pupil. The Catholic secondary schools of the Dominion had an attendance of over 4000, and at a cost of £11 per pupil this amounted to £45,000 per annum, which was saved to the State. In Canterbury alone the Catholic primary schools saved the Government an annual expenditure of £11,800, and the Catholic secondary schools of Canterbury, with an attendance of 500, saved another £5500. The Westland Catholic primary schools, with an attendance of 825, saved another £3630. The amount saved to the Government by the Catholics of the Christchurch diocese during the thirty-four years the secular system of education had been in vogue amounted to at least £340,000, while Westland had saved the Government in that period £102,000, making a total of £442,000 for two provinces alone, exclusive of the amount to be spent on buildings and repairs. The amount saved to the Government by the Catholics throughout the Dominion during those thirty-four years totalled at least £1,250,000.' That his Lordship carried his people entirely with him in his earnest and determined protest was shown by the hearty and spontaneous response which his remarks elicited from the large concourse assembled.

Towards the close of the proceedings Mr. Ell—who, in common with the other local M.P.'s, had been invited to be present—was given the opportunity of making a few remarks, and he showed his sense of the fitness of things by making a rambling, ill-thought-out, and anything but courteous attack on the Catholic claims. It would have been an easy matter for the speaker to have simply intimated that he was unable to agree with the Catholic position on the question, but that he was there, not to controvert, but to congratulate the Catholic people on the event of the day; and in such case no one could have possibly taken offence. Instead of doing that, however, Mr. Ell, with wearisome repetition—and to the manifest impatience of his hearers—labored the point as to the utter undesirableness and impossibility of granting the Catholic demand. The burden of his song was that 'if the Catholic schools received State aid, so should the Anglican, Wesleyan, and Presbyterian schools; and that if grants were made in aid of Catholic schools, 'it would mean closing up the State schools altogether.' Mr. Ell spoke as if there were Wesleyan and Presbyterian schools at every street corner: as a matter of fact, we believe there is not a Wesleyan or Presbyterian primary school in the whole Dominion. So far as we know, there is not one denominational primary school in New Zealand—other than the Catholic schools—that is teaching the State syllabus and is subject to State inspection. To speak as if the country was dotted with Anglican, Wesleyan, and Presbyterian schools, all possessing the same qualifications for a State grant as Catholic schools possess, is in the last degree disingenuous; and in regard to his remarks on this aspect of the question, it is possible to believe in Mr. Ell's sincerity only at the expense of his intelligence.

The answer to all this somewhat superficial talk about 'denominationalism' is (1) As remarked by Bishop Grimes, that if the other denominations establish primary schools in every district as the Catholics have done, Catholics will be the first to admit their right to State assistance; but (2), as his Grace Archbishop Redwood pointed out the other day, there is practically not the slightest likelihood of this coming to pass because the other religious denomina-