

tions have from the first accepted the State system. And we have the authority of Archdeacon Harper for saying that this latter remark applies, in a very large degree, even to the Anglican body. 'I believe,' he said the other day when addressing the members of the Primitive Methodist Conference, 'that ninety-nine hundredths of our people would prefer to do something to secure a training for children that would obviate the necessity for separate schools.' And (3) the suggestion that the policy of giving grants in aid to such denominational schools as satisfy State requirements in regard to secular efficiency would lead to the closing of the public schools, is completely disproved by the incontestable facts of actual experience. In Germany, Holland, Belgium, England, and Canada—not to mention other countries—denominational schools are maintained out of the public funds, much as Catholics advocate should be done in New Zealand; yet in these countries the State schools flourish side by side with the denominational schools, and most of the countries named rank as being amongst the most highly educated and progressive nations in the world. We can only judge of what will happen, by what has happened; and we oppose these actual, indisputable, concrete facts to the 'scared guess-work' of our editors and politicians.

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No doubt Mr. Ell was—in part, at least—stimulated to take the position he did on Sunday afternoon by the utterance of one of his political chiefs, the Hon. Mr. Fowlds, Minister for Education, at Grey Lynn, the other day. Mr Fowlds is reported as having said:

'The present Government, like all Governments that have gone before it since 1877, stands by the present system, and so far as I am personally concerned I have on every occasion when offering my services for Parliament declared unequivocally for the maintenance of the existing system, and rather than be a party to any fundamental change, I should prefer to be excluded altogether from the public life of the Dominion. The will of the people must prevail in education as in everything else in a democratic country, but I am certain the democracy of this country will look critically at any proposal which would tend to lead us back into the dangerous and unsatisfactory bypaths of denominationalism from which we escaped after much tribulation in 1877.'

The advantage of such utterances as those of Mr. Ell and Mr. Fowlds is that they put us in the position of knowing precisely where the speakers stand in regard to us. Some time ago, when discussing the wobbly ways of politicians, we said that they were rarely known nowadays to 'nail their colors to the mast,' or to take a determined and unequivocal stand on anything. We should have added one qualifying exception—when they feel quite sure that they have a big majority behind them their courage is something magnificent to behold! They are liable, however, like less exalted beings, to occasionally make mistakes in their calculations. 'Rather than be a party,' said the valiant Minister, 'to any fundamental change (in our education system), I should prefer to be excluded altogether from the public life of the Dominion.' The utterances of virtuous outbursts like these—who very rarely mean what they say—have, before now, much to their surprise, been quietly taken at their word.

Notes

The Post Office

Admirable on the whole as our postal arrangements are, the day has not yet arrived when the public can place implicit dependence on them. On Tuesday morning of last week, an hour and a-half before mail time, certain of our editorial matter—including our comments on Mr. Ell's speech and the rest of the matter now appearing in this column—was posted at the Christchurch Post Office; and, in order to make assurance double sure, we had the matter registered. After all our precautions, some genius in the office placed the packet in the wrong receptacle; and instead of reaching Dunedin on Tuesday, the matter only arrived on Wednesday night, nearly twenty-four hours too late to be included in last week's issue. We mention the matter, not for the purpose of animadverting on the post office people—who made every possible apology—but so that readers may understand why our reference to certain recent happenings is thus belated.

Our American Visitor

The Right Rev. Mgr. Fowler, a visitor from the United States, who has figured in several interesting interviews in the daily press, has been in Christchurch for the past fortnight; and though ostensibly on a holiday visit to the Dominion, the Monsignor has had a sufficiently busy time.

On the first Sunday of the month he preached at three Masses in the Cathedral; and at Benediction in the evening—on the occasion of the usual monthly procession—he delivered a fourth sermon, the last being a singularly appropriate, devotional, and touching discourse on the Blessed Sacrament. On the following Sunday the Monsignor delivered a pithy, pointed, and outspoken address at the opening of St. Bede's Collegiate School; and in the evening preached the occasional sermon in connection with the anniversary of the opening of the Cathedral. The vast building was thronged to the doors, and the preacher chose as his subject the claims of the Catholic Church to be the true Church of Jesus Christ. The speaker's description—introduced with great appositeness and skill—of scenes in Rome at the time of the present Pope's election and coronation, was absorbingly interesting; and the whole address was aptly described by his Lordship Bishop Grimes as 'an eloquent and masterly discourse.' Monsignor Fowler leaves Christchurch this week, either to view the beauties of the West Coast, or in the direction of Dunedin. Wherever he may go, our priests will find in him a most genial, cultured, and engaging personality; and our people who may be privileged to listen to his telling and impressive discourses, have in store for them a rare treat. If Monsignor Fowler's addresses are a fair specimen of American pulpit eloquence, it is little wonder that Catholicism has made such giant strides, and is now easily the dominant religion in the land of the Stars and Stripes.

The Education Question

The recent utterance of his Grace Archbishop Redwood on the subject, the numerous press comments on that utterance, the pointed declaration of the Minister of Education the other day at Auckland, and the remarks of his Lordship Bishop Grimes at Christchurch on Sunday week, have all combined to make the Education question the question of the hour; and it is little likely—this being election year—that interest in the subject will be allowed to decline. Under the circumstances, we warmly recommend those of our readers who have not yet purchased a copy, to make themselves possessed, without delay, of Dr. Cleary's admirable pamphlet, entitled *Secular versus Religious Education*. It is, in our judgment, the ablest and most thoughtful work that has come from his pen—and that is saying a very great deal. There is not an aspect of the question which is not dealt with, and—thanks to a copious index—the reader can ascertain at very short notice exactly why the Church objects to the existing State system; why Catholics cannot accept any of the Bible-in-Schools programmes, or the New South Wales system; how far the Catholic body could co-operate with other religious bodies in trying to secure a change for the better; and what precisely it is that Catholics claim from the State, together with a statement of the various ways in which that claim can be met without in any way impairing—much less destroying—the State system. The reader will find, also, complete replies to the well-worn arguments advanced by the secular press against the Catholic position; and the work remains to this day unanswered, because it is unanswerable. The price—1s, or posted 1s 3d—brings the book well within the reach of all, and those of our readers who have not yet secured a copy should lose no time in ordering. The work is a veritable vademecum on the subject; and no Catholic who desires to be thoroughly equipped on this great question can afford to be without it.

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

The annual meeting of the Christian Brothers' Old Boys' Association takes place in St. Joseph's Hall on Tuesday evening.

The Right Rev. Mgr. Fowler, who is on a visit to Christchurch, where he is the guest of his Lordship Bishop Grimes, is expected in Dunedin towards the end of the week.

A sewing guild in connection with the St. Vincent de Paul Society was started during the week at Mrs. Crowe's residence, Kaikorai, in charge of Mrs. Crowe and Mrs. Cornish. Mrs. Rossbotham has been appointed secretary of the North-east Valley guild.

The Catholic schools' picnic, which was held on Wednesday of last week, was most successful from every point of view. The attendance was remarkably good, about 1400 children and adults being conveyed by train, consisting of nineteen carriages, to Evansdale—an ideal spot for such an outing. In addition, numbers proceeded to the grounds by vehicles, so that during the afternoon there must have been about 1800 persons present. The weather was perfect, and those who were not interested in the various amusements organised for the entertainment of the children took the opportunity of viewing the pretty scenery along the river. The management committee had a very busy time catering for the amusement of the juveniles, and

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