

lowing address, from the Catholic Archbishops and Bishops of the Commonwealth, was forwarded for presentation to the King on Coronation Day: 'Your Majesty,—Permit me on the part of the Archbishops and Bishops of the Australian Commonwealth, whose names are hereto attached, to offer your Majesty on your Coronation Day the loving homage and devoted loyalty of ourselves, the clergy, and the spiritual flocks entrusted to our care. The 22nd of June, 1911, will be celebrated as a day of rejoicing throughout the whole world-wide domain of your vast Empire, but nowhere will it witness greater enthusiasm or greater joy than among your faithful subjects of the Australian Commonwealth. We congratulate you in that with the sceptre of dominion you have inherited from your royal father, King Edward the Seventh, the mantle and prestige of the "Peacemaker." The negotiations so successfully begun with the United States of America will, we are confident, initiate a new era and secure further triumphs of peace. We trust that it may be your privilege to bring to many nations the blessings which characterise that crowning grace of Christian civilisation. It will be our fervent prayer that many years of prosperity and peace, with every other blessing that Heaven can bestow, may mark a glorious reign of King George the Fifth and of Queen Mary, your gracious consort.—Your faithful and devoted subjects, * PATRICK F. CARDINAL MORAN, Archbishop of Sydney. May 24, 1911.' (Here follow the names of all the Bishops.) It would require Mr. Sam Weller's 'pair o' patent double million magnifyin' gas microscopes of hextra power' to detect disloyalty in this pronouncement; and the *Inangahua Times* need not worry its little brain, or annoy its broad-minded readers, with any further diatribes about Cardinal Moran and disunion.

Settlement By Consent

Some three or four years ago, a suggestion was made in the correspondence columns of this paper to the effect that it might help to galvanise fresh life into the education question and to promote a practical settlement of the problem if accredited representatives of the leading religious denominations (including the Catholic body) were to meet in Round Table Conference. The writer of the letter referred to endeavoured to establish the following propositions: (1) That Catholics obviously have more in common with the upholders—in whatever degree—of the religious principle in education than with the secularists, and that, in the interests of both of the former parties, a junction of forces, if it were found practicable, would be good generalship. (2) That while Catholics could not compromise one iota on the Catholic fundamental principle—viz., Catholic schools for Catholic children with Catholic teachers under Catholic control—the Catholic representatives at such a Conference would be free to discuss terms and conditions of mutual support. Thus, if Anglicans and Presbyterians wanted the introduction of the New South Wales system, and would be willing to support Catholic claims if Catholic support were given to their proposal, there would be no sacrifice of principle—justice being done to Catholics—in the Catholic representatives discussing and agreeing to such an arrangement. (3) That so long as the Government and the politicians can play off Catholics against the New South Wales advocates, and the 'Bible-only' people against both, they are furnished with a most convenient excuse for doing nothing at all in the matter of religious education. (4) That such a conference could hardly do any harm—and that it would at least give us an opportunity of getting the ear of the public, and of bringing before them a clear and reasoned statement of our position and our claims. The suggestion was debated with considerable vigor, pro and contra; and if the discussion did nothing else, it helped to revive interest in the subject at a time when the whole question seemed moribund.

* We refer to the matter now merely to mention that a suggestion similar to that which was ventilated in the *Tablet* correspondence columns has been hinted at in very high quarters in England, in connection with this same education problem. It appears that Mr. Asquith has promised the Nonconformists to introduce—sooner or later—a new Education Bill; and the friends of denominational education are naturally not too pleased at the prospect. We now quote the *Liverpool Catholic Times*: 'But Lord Hugh Cecil, a thorough-going Churchman and an ardent defender of the Church schools, put a question (in the House of Commons) which shows that he feels keenly the peril, under present circumstances, of the introduction of a new Education Bill. He asked the Prime Minister whether he would take steps to promote an interchange of opinion with a view to settling the matter by consent before any Bill is introduced. To which Mr. Asquith replied: "I should be very glad if that were possible." The answer may be read to mean that the Prime Minister would be glad if it were possible to take steps to promote an interchange of opinion, or that he would be glad if the

controversy could be settled by consent. We think most people would be glad if both things were possible.' On the face of it, there is nothing in Lord Hugh Cecil's way of putting the question to suggest that Catholics would not be invited to participate in this 'interchange of opinion'; and, assuming the possibility of such a contingency, the *Catholic Times* briefly discusses the wisdom or otherwise of Catholic participation. The situation in England is so different from that obtaining here that the viewpoint of our contemporary is hardly applicable to the circumstances of this country. If we in New Zealand had the same measure of justice as is accorded to our co-religionists in England, and if Anglicans here, as there, stood strongly for denominationalism, we too should probably see little necessity for, and little advantage in, a conference. But though not (for us) conclusive, the views of the *Catholic Times* are certainly interesting; and we herewith present them to our readers: 'We say the Churchmen and the Free Churchmen, for we do not think that Catholics, even were they invited, would have anything to gain by entering a Conference. The Churchmen can compromise. The Free Churchmen can compromise. They occupy religious ground which has so many features in common that a mutual arrangement is conceivable, and has come very near being a fact. But no arrangement that we can think of will be found in any compromise between the Church and the Free Churches which will be satisfactory to them both and to us. Catholics have nothing to compromise, except at the cost of conscience. And compromise there we shall never admit or commit. We have so clearly and so fully stated our position, and that position is so generally understood, that we do not seem to be required to enter into a Conference for the discussion of our principles. But might our presence in a Conference lead to a useful exposition of our principles? It is a difficult question to decide. There is much to be said for and against. Might not our consent to take a part in such a Conference be held to be evidence that we were willing to talk of terms? Luckily, we shall be guided by the collective wisdom of our hierarchical leaders, should participation in such a Conference ever be proposed to us.'

SPANISH LIBERALISM

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ILLITERACY?

The religious question is again growing acute in Spain (writes the Rev. Charles J. Mullaly, S.J., in *America*).

At the same time the versatile anti-Catholic press agents continue to inform the foreign newspaper world that the Radical Liberal programme, and especially the borrowed French Association Law, is a move to weaken Catholic Church influence, which in Spain, they say, is opposed both to primary education and to solid secondary educational work. These writers give to the foreign press the high figure of 63.78 per cent. of the 1900 census of illiteracy in Spain, and, without explanation of figures or facts, cast the blame upon the Church.

The second volume of the official census of Spain informs us that this 63.78 per cent. includes as illiterates even babies in their mothers' arms. In other words, Spanish official illiteracy begins at birth. Hence, the injustice of offering this 63.78 per cent. as a basis for comparison with countries where official illiteracy begins only at ten or eleven years of age. That the figures of the 1900 census of illiteracy were high, no Catholic Spaniard denies. However, they may reasonably object that the facts in regard to this illiteracy are deliberately misrepresented; that a school census of approximately 2,000,000 children in municipal schools and 350,000 in the private schools of the country during the late Conservative administration should be entirely ignored or falsely attributed to Liberal, anti-Catholic zeal for education. All Catholic Spaniards admit that in some provinces the figures for illiteracy were appallingly high; in others, such as the fervently Catholic Basque country, with its difficult native language, they may well point to the low per cent. of illiteracy, especially since these low figures represent in general a mastery of two widely distinct languages, Basque and Castilian. That Catholic Church influence is responsible for the low figures in these latter provinces is undeniable; that it is not responsible for the high figures in other provinces is a truth easily confirmed by anyone who will read the ecclesiastical history of Spain during the past century.

It is a story of battles with unjust Liberal and Radical legislators, of confiscation of the Church's property, expulsions of her teaching orders and congregations, and of open violence and oppression. To save what was left from the wreck of years of unjust persecution, Pius IX. drew up, with the ministers of Queen Isabel, the Concordat of 1851. For the spiritual welfare and peace of the nation the Church relinquished her claims to confiscated ecclesias-