

writer confounds classes with communities. The New Zealand Tablet is a Catholic publication, and endeavors to represent a community made up of various classes, but it is not a class publication. It may be, however, that this is what the writer intended to convey, though he has been somewhat unfortunate and inaccurate in the words he has used.

If the 'New Zealand Tablet' is a class publication, so is the 'Guardian' itself. This paper represents one train of thought; and one religious, political, and educational party in the community; and it is not going too far to say it is intolerant of Catholicism. In this article to which we are now referring, an effort is made to draw a distinction between the Church as a religious community, and a political organization; and the writer says we are to be opposed, not for our religion, but for our politics. Now in the first place, there is no ground whatever for this distinction. As Catholics, we belong to no party; we are simply members of the Church of Christ. Individually, Catholics are to be found in every party, except such as profess immoral and revolutionary principles. But this distinction is made between the Church as a religious body and a political organization, not because it has any existence in reality, but because it affords a pretext for persecuting Catholics. It is the excuse of tyrants, whether they are BISMARCKS in monarchical states, as in Prussia, or a majority of republicans, as in Switzerland. Whenever it suits the interests or hatreds of tyrants of every sort to consider any part of the constitution of the Catholic Church as a part of a political organization, the Press and the Parliaments declare it to be such. Italy confiscates the property, public and private, of religious, on the plea that their property is not their property, but politics. Germany fines and banishes bishops, priests, and religious of both sexes,—not of course on account of their religion, but for their politics! Switzerland banishes bishops and priests, imprisons priests for preaching the Word of God and administering sacraments to Catholics, not out of hatred to their religion, but on account of their politics! What a farce, and what an insult to human intelligence. This distinction which we regret to see the 'Guardian' has learned, affords a ready pretext for every injustice, cruelty, and outrage against Catholics. On this principle States will be authorised to forbid the practice of the Catholic religion, and say—as indeed is said even now—we do not interfere with your faith: you may believe what you like, but if you attempt to put your faith in practice you must abandon your home and country; or if you remain you must have no churches, no schools, no organization, no ministers of religion. This is the liberty of conscience, and the liberty of religion permitted to Catholics in Switzerland, Germany, and other places at present. It is said to the Church: You cannot be permitted to exist here, because you are a political body. The political plea is set up for the express purpose of destroying the Church, and the hypocrites who have invented this clap-net raise their eyes to heaven and declare they do not persecute religion, because they are willing to allow men to think and believe as they please! But if it were possible for human laws or tyranny to do so, they would not give us leave to think freely or believe differently from themselves.

The 'Guardian' misrepresents us, and also misrepresents the true state of the education question. Speaking of these, our contemporary says:—"Our contemporary, although living in a mixed community, where all sects are equal in the eye of the law, and representing the minority, ignores the necessity for a compromise in the matter of state aid to denominational schools—it tries to impose its opinions upon the majority." Now we deny the three assertions of the above extract. In the first, we deny that in Otago all sects are equal in the eye of the law. According to the law now in force in Otago on the subject of education, national schoolmasters are obliged to read the Bible daily in the schools to such of the children as are not withdrawn by their parents from such reading. This is a penal law necessarily excluding all Catholics from the office of schoolmaster. Here, then, is an inequality imposed on Catholics by the law. All sects, therefore, are not equal in the eye of the law. In the second place, we do not ignore the necessity of a compromise in a mixed community in reference to education. On the contrary, we recognise the necessity of compromise, where such is possible; but we cannot compromise our honor, conscience, religion, and manhood. We cannot compromise that over which we have no dominion—the faith and the future of our children. Thirdly, it is not true that we try to impose our

opinions on the majority; but we do try to prevent the majority imposing its opinions on us. We have never sought for anything, so far as education is concerned, except justice for ourselves, viz., Catholic schools for Catholic children. It never was our intention to interfere in any way with the liberty of others, or to seek to deprive the majority of the schools that appear to be so dear to them. But it is the old story: the tyrant majority, or its organs, charge upon us their own crimes. By every means they endeavor to impose their opinions upon us, and then they turn round and say we are trying to impose our opinions on them. Here in Otago there is an essentially Protestant system of education maintained by the community at large; and because we object to our children being submitted to Protestant training, and ask for justice, we are misrepresented and held up as impracticable, and trying to coerce our fellow citizens. We ask for nothing but justice. We ask for Catholic schools for Catholic children: we never demanded more. So far as we are concerned, the majority may have the present school system, or any other school system. We have no intention or desire to interfere with them.

The 'Guardian' says: "Would it not be much better for the TABLET to deal with what is written, rather than go behind it to hunt for motives." Well, this is not bad from the man who writes a little further on as follows:—"Denominationalism has for its ultimate object the subjection of the human intellect to priestly caste. Religious instruction is a mere blind." Is it not a pity that this writer, whilst administering chastisement to us for hazarding a probable opinion, should himself commit a greater fault, for he declares he is certain of what is certainly untrue.

We have headed this article with the words "The 'Guardian' threatens." What is our meaning? The 'Guardian' says:—"We regret that the TABLET, some time ago, advocated a Catholic block vote at the general elections. Such a policy, if pursued, would react against Catholics, and the Protestant block vote would keep every member of the Catholic Church out of the Legislature." Granted that such a consequence would follow from the Catholic vote—what harm? What good, we may ask, has the presence in Parliament of a few Catholics done to the cause of sound education? None that we know of; and if the Catholic block vote would have the effect, whilst indirectly excluding Catholics from Parliament, of returning a few able and liberal Protestants pledged to do us justice, our gain would be very great indeed. But this spectre raised by the 'Guardian' shall not be permitted to frighten us. For in the first place, here in Otago we cannot be worse off than we are. There is not one Catholic representative from this Province in the Legislature; and what is more, there is not a constituency in all Otago that would not reject, by an overwhelming majority, the most honorable and most highly qualified Catholic in existence, simply an account of his Catholicity. By a block Catholic vote we can lose nothing, whereas on the other hand we may gain many friends, and shall certainly be enabled to execute justice on our enemies.

JUSTICE TO THE 'EVENING STAR.'

We regret exceedingly that it is not in our power this week to pay as much attention as we desire to a leader published by our evening contemporary on Tuesday last. But as the Editor complains that we have falsified the text of his article by inserting in italics words neither expressed nor implied in a quotation from it, we lose no time in making all the reparation in our power by publishing the entire passage as we find it in the 'Evening Star' of the 30th ult. Here it is—"That men have burst the fetters attempted to be thrown around them by the dominant priesthood, is true; for the world has never been left without master spirits, who spurned the bonds that were found sufficient to check less daring souls. Acknowledging no authority in man to bind the mind by dogma, they bent themselves to read God in nature, and sought to learn his laws as revealed in things that are seen. The Church threatened, anathematised, and persecuted; but they triumphed, and the result has been those splendid discoveries in science and attainments in art, of which they laid the foundation, and we, their successors are reaping the rich fruits." We quoted last week only the last sentence, and in order to make it intelligible we inserted in italics, between the words they and triumphed, "its enemies;" and we put them in italics for the purpose of shewing they were our own, and not the 'Evening Star's.' But the 'Evening Star' says the words "its enemies" were not