

THE PRESS, THE EX-MINISTER OF JUSTICE, AND MR BATHGATE.

We have in previous issues published extracts showing the spirit of the press regarding the action of Mr Bathgate in his dual capacity, namely, the Hon. John Bathgate, the Minister of Justice, appointing Mr John Bathgate, the candidate for a Government situation, to a District Judgeship and Police Magistrate.

The 'Southland News' says of him:—It would take us too long to trace the brief but brilliant career of the late Minister of Justice in this place, but we venture to express the hope that some public spirited bookmaker will collect the scattered materials and throw them into readable shape for the benefit of political students. Such a work would go far to prove that certain commonly received opinions are vulgar errors. It would show that strong convictions, high principles, consistency, and good faith are mere obstacles to success—that an accommodating disposition and an imperturbable self-complacency are the only requisites.

The 'Southland Times' expresses its opinion in an article headed "Abuse of office," of Mr Bathgate as follows:—Mr Bathgate's appointment as Resident Magistrate for Dunedin, in succession to Mr Strode, is certainly not in any respect matter for public congratulation, whatever it may be to the individual immediately concerned. There are politicians everywhere whose sole object is so to shape their course as to serve their own turn, but Mr Bathgate, upon his entrance into political life, some three years since, was not supposed to belong to this class. In the discharge of the duty devolving upon him as Minister of Justice, by the appointment of himself, a mere onlooker is impelled to the conclusion that Mr Bathgate has ignored many of the essentials for the appointment. We decidedly object to the retirement of a member of the Government into a salaried office on the Civil List, as well as to the principle of the appointment as highly improper, and tending to the destruction of the spirit of independence in the servants of the public forming part of the Ministry.

THE OTAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

At a late meeting of the Otago Education Board, the following letter was read:—

Dunedin, 21st February, 1874.

SIR,—I am instructed by the Otago Schoolmasters' Association to bring under the notice of the Education Board the following extract from a leading article in the 'Otago Daily Times' of the 20th inst.:—
"The clerics who were full of profound interest in the morals of Aneiteum natives and the religious convictions of the savages in the Malay Archipelago, but did not care a jot for the Walker street brothels or the immoralities of some of our District Schools." It is the opinion of the Association that this charge made in the leading newspaper of the Province, though indirectly, and in a way so insulting to everyone connected with the management of the District Schools, is so gross as to demand a searching investigation as to its truth.—I have, &c.,

W. MILNE,

Secretary Otago Teachers' Association.

The Secretary Otago Education Board, Dunedin.

The Superintendent said that the Board had certainly nothing to do with the clerics, but they had to do with the morality of the District Schools. The allusion in the article in question was rather a sweeping one.

It was ultimately decided to refer the letter back to the Otago Schoolmasters' Association, with a recommendation that the 'Times' should be asked to furnish more specific information.

The 'Times' of a subsequent date had the subjoined paragraph:—

Those members of the Education Board who were so wroth with our Leader on the District Schools would do well to peruse carefully, the letter appearing in our columns to-day, on the subject. Mr Brown puts the matter clearly and distinctly before the public. He does not write under a *nom de plume*, but signs his name in full with his address. Probably the remark made by those of the Board who read this letter will be: "Who'd have thought it?"

The following is the letter referred to:—

I have on more than one occasion been inclined to make a complaint in your columns, about the way in which the walls of my house are defaced by pupils attending the Middle District School. The old building, which I have lately pulled down, was almost covered on both fronts with obscene, filthy, disgusting language and scrawls, about which I spoke to the master some time ago, when he advised me to get the names of the boys who did it; but the difficulty is to bring the offence home to any of them, as there are generally a number of them together, and all deny it, of course.

I have now to complain of the same filthy practice on the walls of the new building, which I have lately erected, and which are already disfigured in several places; and to warn both parents and boys that a strict watch will be kept in future, and the offenders, whoever they are, handed over to the police. I am not the only one who has to complain of the same abominable practice; and I do think that a little more careful surveillance over the habits of the boys, both by parents and schoolmasters, would help to put a stop to it. I am, &c., J. M. BROWN, Salutation Hotel, Rattray Street.

THE MURDERER SULLIVAN.

THE Tuaranga 'Times,' criticising the action of the Colonial Executive, in regard to the murderer Sullivan, observes:—"California is to receive from New Zealand—as a complimentary State offering, we presume, to commemorate the re-organisation of the postal service—an unmitigated scoundrel, who deserved death more richly even than his villainous companions. Surely it cannot be! but if true, then have the Government of New Zealand been guilty of a cowardly and dastardly act towards California, which, depend upon it, will some day be bitterly avenged. Sullivan is too vile a criminal to be at large on our own shores, and so, forsooth, he is shipped away to San Francisco! We would suggest that the Agent-General be instructed to advertise this worthy action in the provincial papers at home. Mr Vogel, too,

might make capital out of it for his pamphlet on immigration. 'Every inducement offered to crime.' 'Murders speedily adjusted.' 'Whatever ye would that man should do to you, do ye also unto them'; but our authorities are certainly not acting upon the principle."

The Tuaranga 'Times' concludes:—"The real responsibility and odium rests with his (the Governor's) Executive, and unto the members of the Cabinet, therefore, may the disgrace and blame be fairly attached."

A correspondent of the 'Lyttelton Times' writes:—"A long retrospect over the clouded aspect of Australian felony fails to detect anything like the cold, deliberate, blood-letting, which glides the murderers on the West Coast of this Island. They stand *per se* exemplars of what man may become, and in comparison with these the savage, so called, is a perfect man. It seems, however, good to our present governors to send one who, if the voice of the majority is of value, was the chief miscreant, a mad dog, adrift—no, not adrift: they send him to a friendly shore inhabited by people with whom we hope to have the best relations. No wonder that the good people of Otago telegraphed that such a cargo was under way, and less wonder that the captain of the Mikado refused such a freight. It is for us to surmise what our ultimate fate will be, under a Government capable of committing such a deliberate crime."

A Thames paper remarks:—"It is to be hoped that we have heard the last of Sullivan for a time, but there is no certainty about it. Some people say that the report published yesterday to the effect that Sullivan had been sent back to Dunedin, is only a blind, and that the Government intention of shipping him to some foreign port will be carried out as soon as public excitement has subsided. A correspondent writing to the Auckland Star suggested that Sullivan's presence in town offered a fine opportunity for the exercise of practical Christianity, and that some minister should take the ex-convict by the hand. The Editor of the 'Star' suggests his being taken by the neck."

A private telegram from Auckland states that "the notorious Sullivan still remains in this place in charge of Sergeant Watson. He has most urgently requested to be sent back to Dunedin gaol, there to end the remainder of his days."

A subsequent private telegram from Auckland says:—"The General Government has resolved to detain the notorious Sullivan in Auckland for the present. Sergeant Watson leaves Auckland on Monday first, per Taranaki. Sullivan continues to be very insubordinate to the authorities."

CORRESPONDENCE.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—The simple thing to do for carrying on our Catholic schools is tax ourselves as others do. The English are not so Prussified or Bismarck-ridden as to insist on us Catholics paying rates for schools, under ban of the Church, when they see us burdening ourselves for the maintenance of our own seminaries. They profess being admirers of fair-play; they must, then, condemn a man's being double weighted with his own and his neighbour's burden. The Catholics of New Zealand should organise at the various centres of population unions, committees and officers for the purpose of collecting funds, to be deposited with the Bishops, so as to enable their Lordships to erect and maintain schools wherever they see proper. Of course every Catholic in Maoriland should go to gaol rather than pay the Government imposition.—I am, &c., D. M. CAMERON.

Riverton.

RANDOM NOTES.

"A chiel's amang ye takin' notes,
And faith he'll print 'em."

THERE is a fund of humour in your Irishman that nothing can stamp out; adversity cannot crush it, nor misfortune overcome it, and under all circumstances, and at all times—unconsciously, it may be—will it float to the surface. I remember some few months since seeing the prospect of as pretty a fight as ever gladdened the heart of a Donnybrookian, spoiled by this under-current making itself visible at the wrong time. A countryman of mine, but one who had evidently arrived at maturity before the enactment of compulsory education, was holding forth successfully against the denominational system of education. I say successfully, for though Lindley Murray had been murdered, and Dr. Johnson strangled over and over again, his logic and line of argument was of such a nature as fairly to *nonplus* his more matter-of-fact adversary. The arguments on both sides, if not convincing, were decidedly forcible, and the probability was momentarily increasing of there being a "striking illustration" accompanying them. The point under discussion was the compensation to be awarded to teachers, which Pat either could not or would not understand; and vainly did his opponent strive to make him comprehend that payment was by results. The battle raged fiercely, and opinions more candid than complimentary were interchanged; but just as the accommodating host was about to clear the decks for action, a change came over the complexion of affairs, and one for which Pat alone was accountable. His face, which a moment before had been the perfect index of the passion by which he had been swayed, suddenly underwent a change, and, with a smile and a wink which conveyed a world of meaning, he said: "Oh, begorra, I see now what your driving at; you mane that they'll be paid according to their *usefulness*!" This was too much; and the hearty burst of laughter which greeted the birth of *this stranger* was taken by Pat as a concession that he had floored his antagonist—as, indeed, he completely had—and the contending parties called the "usefulness" of the landlord into requisition by paying tribute to Baalchus.

Not long since, in company with a brother scribe, I paid a visit to a Lunatic Asylum, and in course of inspection was brought to that class of unfortunates whose cases were held to be hopeless. They were in the exercise yard, which was surrounded by a high wall, on the outside of which a mound had been raised to enable visitors and others to see and converse with the patients without being compelled to mix with them. No sooner had we made our appearance than we became the centre of attraction to the unhappy inmates, each one re-