

excuse of the Wellington Board, that their inspectors cannot overtake the work, is altogether inadequate. Catholics claim the benefit of Government inspection of their schools not as a favour but as a right. They pay in taxation their full share to the fund which pays the inspectors' salaries, and they have therefore, an undoubted right to the services of these officers, in the direction indicated, when they require them. The fact that the inspectors cannot overtake the work may be a valid reason for increasing the inspectorial staff in the Wellington district but it is no excuse whatever for refusing to give to Catholics their just rights. As a matter of fact it is the simplest thing in the world to overcome the difficulty alleged by the Wellington Board. It can be done either by appointing a permanent assistant-inspector or by utilising for a certain portion of the year the services of one of the teaching staff in the work of inspection and examination. If it be urged that either of these courses involves additional expense the retort is obvious. If the Catholics of the Colony chose to send their children to the State schools to-morrow they would impose a burden of expense upon the board ten times greater than that involved in making the slight increase in staff necessary to carry out the work of inspection and examination of Catholic schools. The excuse of the Wellington Board is, therefore, as we have said, altogether inadequate. For pure and unadulterated bigotry, however, commend us to the North Canterbury Education Board. The members of this body think it an eminently right and proper thing that the taxes contributed by Catholics should be diverted to the inspection and maintenance of any number of secular schools, but their consciences are shocked at the very thought of allowing any portion of the funds voted by Parliament for the support of the so-called national schools to be diverted to the inspection or examination of Catholic schools. In taking up this position they place themselves in plain and palpable opposition to the distinct provisions of the Education Act. Section 98 of the Act provides that "where the teacher or manager of any private school desires to have their school inspected by an inspector, such teacher or manager may apply to the Board to authorise such inspection, and the same when authorised shall be conducted in like manner as the public schools." This shows that the framers of the Act clearly contemplated that the funds voted by Parliament should be diverted in the very way that is so obnoxious to the educational skinflints of North Canterbury. Moreover we have distinct evidence, outside of the provisions of the Act, that this was the intention of its framers. The Hon. G. C. BOWEN, the author of the Education Act, in a speech delivered in 1894, said:—"He would hail with pleasure every kind of good school, public or private, that might be maintained in these islands, and he would like to see them so far publicly encouraged as to be allowed to claim as a right the advantages of State inspection should they see fit to ask for it, for the Education Act contemplated such encouragement." The North Canterbury Board, therefore, stand convicted of going behind both the letter and the spirit of the Act which it is the very object of their existence to fairly and faithfully administer. It is gratifying to think that only one Board was found in the whole Colony so lost to a sense of shame as to thus openly flaunt its bigotry on the public gaze, and the body of men who could act, in their public capacity, from such miserably narrow and sectarian motives can only be regarded with a feeling of contempt.

In reply to our correspondent's second query, it appears to us that there is only one course open to Catholics in the districts in which State inspection is not yet conceded. What is wanted is legislation which shall make it compulsory on the Boards to comply with the Bishops' request. Experience shows that it is useless to expect Catholic or non-Catholic members of the House, of their own motion, to introduce such legislation. If we had a block and tackle in front of them and a goad behind they might be made to move, but not one of them seems to have the courage or energy to move of themselves. The only course is, therefore to approach the House by petition, and if the Petitions Committee reports favourably, members will soon pluck up courage to move in the matter. In order to give practical help to our correspondent we give a rough outline of the form which the petition might take. It might be worded thus:—"The memorial of your petitioners humbly sheweth: (1.) That several of the Education Boards throughout the Colony have refused to accede to the request of the Catholic

Hierarchy for State inspection of Catholic schools. (2.) That the Catholic children of the said districts suffer grievous hardship thereby, many avenues of employment being absolutely closed to them through their inability to produce the Government Inspector's certificate of educational attainments. (3.) That the Catholics of the Colony contribute their full share in taxation to the fund from which the Inspectors' salaries are drawn, and have, therefore, a just right to the services of the Inspectors when they require them. (4.) That the Education Act clearly contemplates and distinctly provides for Government inspection of private schools. Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House will pass such legislation as will absolutely secure to Catholics in every educational district their just right to the benefit of Government inspection of their schools." There is no possibility of legislation being introduced during the present session, but a great deal will have been gained if the petitions be presented and a favourable report obtained. The same course can then be repeated early next session and with satisfactory prospects of success. We hope that our correspondent and those who think with him will consult with their natural leaders, and, if so advised, will proceed to take prompt action in the matter. The longer Catholics in the non-complying districts put up with the present state of things the harder it will be to secure redress.

THE Most Rev. Dr. Verdon arrived from Melbourne by the Waikare on Wednesday last, and disembarked at the Bluff. His Lordship proceeded next day to Gore, where he held visitation, and on Sunday administered the sacrament of confirmation to over 80 candidates. His Lordship visits Clinton, Wyndham, and Heriot during the week, and on Sunday next he will solemnly open and bless the new church at Riversdale. Dr. Verdon is expected to return to Dunedin in the early part of next week.

THE Rev. Father Quirke, who has for some time been associated with Very Rev. Father O'Donnell, in the Ashburton district, has been removed to Rangiora.—*Ashburton Mail*.

IN order to make room for a complete account of the opening of St. Patrick's Cathedral, we are compelled to hold over some locals, correspondence, and a quantity of general reading matter.

DURING the past week the following subscription to the South Dunedin Catholic Orphanage Fund has been received:—Mr. Owen Kelly (Gore), £1. Contributions towards the erection of the Orphanage will be thankfully received by the Sisters of Mercy of South Dunedin and by the Catholic clergy of Dunedin, and will be duly acknowledged in the columns of the TABLET.

DURING the week we have received parcels of stamps for Father Kreyenborg's mission from the following:—Ellen Danahy, Charleston; Mary E. Boyle, Heddon Bush; Miss Janet Graham, Fairfax (who also sends 1s. subscription); Ellen Carney, Staveley; and Eily Twomey, Temuka.

THE many Dunedin friends of Mr. Michael O'Halloran will hear with regret that he has been transferred from Dunedin to Ashburton. During the many years that Mr. O'Halloran has done police duty in Dunedin he has made himself popular with all classes of the community. Though very strict in the performance of his duty, his good nature and obliging manners always gained the respect of those he came in contact with. Ashburton has gained a good police officer and a first-class citizen, and the Church has also gained a strict adherent and a very generous benefactor to all works in connection with it. We wish Mr. O'Halloran every success in his new sphere.

WITH its issue of October 30—just prior to the great opening ceremonies—the *Melbourne Advocate* published a very large supplement giving a complete history of the Catholic Church in Victoria and containing admirably executed views, not only of the cathedral but of all the larger church, convent, and school buildings in the diocese. Both the views and letterpress were excellent, and we heartily congratulate our contemporary on having produced a memorial so entirely worthy of the great occasion.

WE give elsewhere a complete though condensed account of the great religious festival in connection with the opening of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne. It will be noted that the Most Rev. Dr. Verdon sang Pontifical Vespers on the Sunday evening, and his Grace Archbishop Redwood was the preacher on the occasion. Dr. Verdon also celebrated Pontifical High Mass at the Cathedral on All Saints' Day. We hope to publish next week the full text of Archbishop Redwood's sermon, which is described by our Melbourne and Sydney exchanges as a very eloquent discourse.

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