

stood. The experiments, if tried, will fail, and therefore will do no good. Now for the reasons for my belief on this point:—

(1.) The principal obstacle to an understanding between the Catholic Church and other religious bodies on the question of education, as well as on other questions, comes from an absolute want of a defined attitude against the secular system of education. By the large majority of Protestants, the secular system has been accepted, at least by the laity. If it has been opposed by some of the clergy, the opposition has been so weak as to leave no mark on the politics of this country. The only attempt at mending the secularism of the system comes from the Bible-in-schools party, and what agreement is possible between that party and the Catholic Church is known to everybody.

(2.) It may be possible to begin negotiating with one of these numerous religious bodies, as to the ending of such negotiations, this is another affair. Religious bodies outside the Catholic Church are so numerous at present that the continuation of the negotiations may easily become like a case in Chancery—interminable, and the time at our disposal is fearfully limited.

(3.) The demand for remuneration on the part of the Catholic Church is clear, founded on real and solid work shown by the Inspectors' official reports. People may open their eyes to consider our claims, then admit them or reject them. Not so clear are the claims of other religious bodies. Have they ever been formulated? They are to be ascertained, yes. I was forgetting that it is the beginning of the interminable task, which this proposed experiment places before us. The Catholic Church has a system, a policy; the other denominations have none on the education question. We are told that the Church should seek for the help of these denominations as if unity of action could be obtained without unity of principle and system. This proposal reminds us of the fellowship of the kettle and of the earthen pot. The journey of the Catholic Church on the path of Christian education is difficult enough without the encumbrance of one or more brittle companions, whose only help will consist in getting broken to pieces; then the sure-footed traveller will have the additional trouble of picking up the fragments and carrying them.

(4.) Is there any precedent in history of a deputation sent by the prelates of the Catholic Church to other religious bodies to form a league for the protection of Christian interests? This question is just put for the sake of obtaining more information on this important subject, and if such precedent exists, it will be a welcome guiding light in this new venture. Such a step might be easily construed by non-Catholics as an official recognition, on the part of the Catholic Church of other religious bodies as faithful exponents of Christian doctrine—a recognition which the Church can never give. All attempts at bridging the wide and deep chasm separating the Church from non-Catholic denominations are feats surpassing human skill, and my conviction is that the Catholic Church will unite with other religious bodies when the Tower of Babel will be finished.—I am, etc.,

TUBA.

To the Editor.

Sir,—The discussion on the suggested forward movement going on in your columns strikes our friends 'Tuba' and Mr. Buckley very strangely. I presume they are both uncumbered with families, otherwise, I venture to say, the question would affect them very differently. It is a very easy matter to be liberal with the other fellow's money. It is also much easier to glibly advocate self-sacrifice than to practise it. For our friends' information I have worked out a short estimate, from my personal experience, to show to what tune each individual, circumstanced as I am, suffers under our present system of education.

The statutory capitation grant paid by Government for each child to Education Boards is £3 15s per head per annum. The total amount paid last year to Boards was £480,000. It is safe to say that primary education costs this Colony half a million annually. Our population is somewhere about 850,000, and according to these figures every person in the Colony pays about 11s 9d per annum towards our State education. If you calculate on a family of seven children you will find that the parents pay annually towards the State system £5 5s 9d. Let us say this sum must be paid by the parents for sixteen years, while they are rearing each member of that family. The poor Catholic workman, in the circumstances mentioned, pays £84 12s towards the State

system of education. He pays more, because when his family have been reared and have gone to do for themselves he and his wife must go on paying until their death. But this is only one side of the man's payments towards education. He has to contribute towards the support of the Catholic schools. Working on the same capitation grant, and supposing each child to be kept at a Catholic school for say seven years, the education of the family will cost £183 15s, so that during the school years of their family the parents have to pay in all for primary education the sum of £268 7s. This sum is a heavy handicap on the poor Catholic working-man, imposed upon him during his most struggling years, when he is bringing up his children and trying to make a home.

Does it not appear like mockery on the part of persons contributing little or nothing towards this burden to pat me on the back and call me a 'hero' and a 'martyr,' and exhort me to go on with my acts of self-sacrifice, give no trouble to secularists, but allow them to trample me down as they advance? This is cowardice and baseness of the worst description. Mr. Buckley claims that under the present system we are independent, and that seeking State aid is looking for trouble. He instances France. But Mr. Buckley is singularly ignorant of the state of things in France. The French Catholic schools were not receiving State aid. Yet the Government has made an effort to utterly destroy them, although the French Catholics have been for the past thirty-five years doing exactly what Mr. Buckley wants us to do—they have been keeping quiet and saying nothing, with the sad results that have now overtaken them. As soon as the trumpet-call issues from the leaders of agnostic coteries who will, unless Christians manfully combine against them, control our politics more and more as the years go by, the Legislature will interfere with Christian schools be they state-aided or not. All this is what has just happened in France. Yet Mr. Buckley wants us to keep quiet, say nothing, cross our hands, bow our heads, await the inevitable, and allow secularists, agnostics, and infidels to trample us down as they advance in numbers and resources. This is as I said above—cowardice and baseness.

It gives me the greatest pleasure to join with Mr. Buckley in his expression of admiration for the hard and ill-requited, almost hopeless, work of our nuns, Brothers, and clergy. Without them there would be no Catholic schools. But Mr. Buckley advises that their difficulties and burdens should be allowed to continue—should not even be complained of lest the peace of secularists and atheists should be disturbed; lest their anger, forsooth, be aroused; lest they be checked in any way in their career of effort to destroy Christianity and religion. Had the Irish people kept silent and followed the advice of men like Mr. Buckley, in what stage would the Irish Home Government movement be at present? Can minorities by imbecile silence and a do-nothing policy ever advance their position or resist the aggressions of the enemy? And the enemy in the present case is undoubtedly aggressive and checked by few qualms of conscience, honor, or justice.—I am, etc.,

J.C.

Mr. William O'Brien several years ago married Mademoiselle Raffalovitch, daughter of a celebrated financier, with whom he received an immense dowry.

Mr. William Marconi, the inventor of wireless telegraphy, is only 32 years of age. It is just eleven years since he first brought his invention before the notice of the British public.

Mr. Percy Jones, the popular bandmaster of St. Augustine's (Geelong) Orphanage Band, has declined a second pressing offer from Albury to take up the conductorship of the local band. Though the salary offered is a tempting one, Mr. Jones does not feel disposed to leave Geelong yet awhile.

Messrs. Beck Bros., painters and paperhangers, Upper Walker street, Dunedin, are prepared to renovate premises on the shortest notice....

Notwithstanding the cabled news regarding a rise in price of tea, the celebrated Hondai-Lanka is sold at the old rate, whilst the quality is better, if possible, than ever....

The publication of an advertisement in a Catholic paper shows that the advertiser not only desires the patronage of Catholics, but pays them the compliment of seeking it through the medium of their own religious journal. So says an esteemed and wide-awake American contemporary. A word to the wise is sufficient....

GEO. T. WHITE
NOVELTIES AT LOWEST PRICES

Importer, Watchmaker, Manufacturing Jeweller, Medalist, etc.
LAMBTON QUAY, COLOMBO STREET, CHRISTCHURCH.
Wellington. Established ... 1876