

that in these days of the "freedom of the press"—that sadly abused phrase—a newspaper should open its columns to the unrestricted discussion of all sorts of questions is, we know, commonly held. But it is by no means the whole truth. Every reputable journal imposes restrictions upon its correspondence. There is, first and foremost, the law of libel to be observed. No journal is justified in publishing a wanton attack upon an individual. The very power that it possesses compels it, morally as well as legally, to exercise a close supervision upon the matter that it publishes, and morally, as well as legally, it should be able to justify the publication, even of the bare truth, by showing that it has regard only for the welfare of the public. But apart from the law of libel there is a very potent influence that keeps a newspaper within bounds. It is the influence of public opinion. There are not many daily newspapers without "views" of their own, and the purpose of the ordinary secular newspaper, apart from the dissemination of views, is to preach its policy to as wide a circle of readers as possible. If its "policy" is political it does not wantonly offend sections of its readers by publishing articles offensive to religious feelings. If it elects to throw open its columns to the unrestricted discussion of religious questions it is not entitled to complain if some of its readers protest. Father Hickson may be accused of threatening to boycott the *New Zealand Times*, yet to our mind he was perfectly within his rights, and he simply had the courage to express his views openly. We may or may not agree with his views of the pernicious nature of the article to which he took exception, but we cannot honestly condemn him for protesting, any more than we should quarrel with a parent who declined to let his children read the reports of divorce proceedings. The editor must always decide for himself whether he will admit any particular article to his journal, but having admitted it he should accept the consequences. Another interesting point is raised by the suggestion that an offensive article is less offensive because it is signed by the author. Some of our correspondents have a brave contempt for the anonymous correspondent, but we must confess that, in general, we have no fault to find with him. Certain letters ought to be signed with the author's name. Correspondence of a personal nature can scarcely be admitted anonymously. But here, again, the editor must exercise his own discretion in admitting or refusing to admit anonymous letters. In the great majority of cases the publication of the writer's name would add nothing to the value of a letter. Many men who have opinions and views to air are too modest to desire to see their names in print, and, as a rule, the signature has no significance. A letter carries special weight when it is signed by a prominent public man or by an acknowledged authority or expert. Otherwise the *nom de plume* seems to us to be preferable, because it prevents a discussion of principles from degenerating into a discussion of personalities. There are plenty of instances, moreover, in which the signing of letters to the newspapers would lead to personal reprisals. Anonymity, we should say, is justifiable except where it is used for the purpose of deception, and there, again, the editor of a newspaper must watch the interests of the public. We do not hesitate to exclude from our columns letters that would readily find admission to magazines and journals for the discussion of special topics, and we do so frankly because we believe that the feelings of our readers should be respected. Other journals may have other views, but if they suffer in influence or in circulation because of those views they are not entitled to complain.

OPENING OF A SCHOOL AT BLENHEIM

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

The solemn blessing and opening of the Father Lewis Memorial School took place on Sunday, January 31. The ceremony was performed by his Grace the Archbishop of Wellington, assisted by the Rev. Father Holley. There were also present the Mayor of Blenheim (Mr. A. McCallum), the Chairman of the Education Board (Mr. R. McCallum), and Mr. H. V. Browne (secretary of the Memorial Committee). The Hibernian Band played several selections during the proceedings. The following account of the ceremony is from the local *Herald*:—

One of the most successful public objects of a voluntary character yet undertaken in this district—the establishment of a memorial school on the Catholic grounds in Maxwell road in honor of the late Very Rev. Father Lewis—was brought to a happy completion on Sunday afternoon, when his Grace Archbishop Redwood performed the opening ceremony, in the presence of a large assemblage of people. The Rev. Father Holley, parish priest, and the others who had worked so enthusiastically and indefatigably to do lasting and practical justice to the memory of the deceased

priest, had the great pleasure of seeing the institution duly inaugurated within a few months of Father Lewis's demise and virtually free of debt. This achievement in the case of a work costing some £800 speaks volumes for not only the deep and general respect and esteem that Father Lewis has left behind him, but also the energy and devotedness of Father Holley and his parishioners and the kindly regard of the many non-Catholics who had contributed to the worthy object.

The building is a handsome structure, constructed in accordance with the latest hygienic principles and other requirements of the State Education Department; and it replaces the old schoolhouse opposite the convent grounds. It enhances the appearance of the Maxwell road district, and, as the Mayor remarked, it is a welcome acquisition to the town. The builder was Mr. James McKinley, to whose workmanship the structure does much credit, and the architect was Mr. J. G. Swan, of Wellington. The fund with which the object was achieved was composed partly of a legacy left to the church by the late Mr. M. O'Shea, and partly by public subscription. The secretary of the Memorial Committee, Mr. H. V. Browne, was a tireless worker.

The Building.

The building, which decidedly improves the grounds, has concrete foundations, and is built of totara and maitai. The design is the old English style. In all there are five class rooms, each being 20ft x 20ft, and they are supplied by roomy cupboards. The walls are supplied with hyloplate boards, which take the place of the old-fashioned blackboard. The windows are supplied with the Austral sash balance patent, and are the first of the kind to be installed in the district. Above the windows there are fanlights erected, worked by the Preston patent, and splendid ventilation is in this way obtained. Each of the rooms are of a lofty nature, being 13ft 6in in height. Round the walls is a pretty tinted dado, and beautifully grained wood (all of which is Marlborough grown); this forms a handsome design.

A memorial tablet is affixed into the wall facing the street, and bears the following inscription:—

'This school is erected by the people of Marlborough to the memory of Rev. W. J. Lewis, S.M., V.G., parish priest of Blenheim, 1885-1891. Beloved by all because of his profound humility, meekness, and charity, associated with zeal for souls, devotion to work, and a fearless defence in attack. Born at Naas, Ireland; died at Wellington, N.Z., June 27th, 1907; aged 54 years.'

The Archbishop's Address.

A beautiful sunny day favored the occasion, and at 3.30 a large number of spectators were congregated in the vicinity of the new school. At a brief ceremony in the church, Archbishop Redwood ascended the pulpit and addressed a congregation of considerable proportions.

His Grace said that he was very happy to be able to take part in this ceremony, and pay a tribute to the memory of his dear old friend, the Very Rev. Father Lewis, who had left behind him the impress of a life that was holy, that was apostolic, and that was full of good works of every kind. He was also happy to have the opportunity of speaking very seriously on the great subject of education. The education question was of the greatest possible importance for the individual, for society, for this Dominion, for mankind in general—because as the child was educated so would the future man be formed. The sapling would grow in the direction in which it was bent; the tree could not be straightened, and if it were distorted it would remain an unseemly spectacle in the fair scheme of Nature. His Grace went on to explain the vital significance of right education from the Catholic point of view. Looking around him, and taking a broad view, one giant fact loomed up before him—the education system founded and maintained by the New Zealand Catholics for the last half-century. It was no exaggeration to say that the Catholic system was the most impressive external fact in the spiritual life of the Dominion. It would be impossible in the short space of time allotted to him to speak fully of the history and meaning of that system, and the magnitude of the sacrifices made by the Catholics on its behalf. But he invited them to consider a few outstanding features. Look at the extent of the lands purchased for their schools; look at the number of buildings raised all over New Zealand; look at the hundreds of teachers employed and expense involved by the upkeep of these schools. About £40,000 a year was saved to the State—that was to say, that a million of money was saved to the taxpayers of New Zealand in 25 years. Why had the Catholics made the gigantic sacrifices—they the poor unfortunates of the Dominion? It was a standing and invincible proof of their deep conviction that upon education depended the faith of their children and the benefits of Christian civilisation in the family and posterity for all time. They had made these sacrifices so

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