

laity are everywhere cordially invited to co-operate, and it is hoped and expected that not only religious confraternities, but social and athletic clubs, and young men's societies of every kind, will take an active part in promoting this eminently sensible and practical reform.

Mr. Seddon and the Tenth Contingent.

Mr. Seddon has been very badly 'bowled out' over his action in regard to the sending away of our Tenth Contingent. When the idea of sending a Tenth Contingent was first mooted by Mr. Seddon, immediately after the Methuen disaster, there was a general feeling even amongst thorough-going Imperialists—voiced by such papers as the *Otago Daily Times*—that Mr. Seddon was going it rather strong in this matter, that New Zealand had already contributed as many men as she could fairly afford for South Africa, and that it was the merest common sense to at least wait until the Home Government gave some indication that further assistance was required. After a time it was definitely stated that Mr. Seddon had received a cable from the British Government inviting further assistance, and in response to this supposed request the Tenth Contingent, consisting of 1000 men, was equipped and despatched. It now turns out that instead of the British Government having first requested further help from the Colony the offer of more men was actually thrust upon them by Mr. Seddon and pressed upon them in a most unbecoming and ridiculous way. The London correspondents' letters just to hand contain the full text of the official cables, which were published in the *London Times*, and these speak for themselves. We quote sufficient to show precisely how the thing was managed.

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The first communication was a telegram from the Premier of New Zealand to Mr. Chamberlain and was in these terms:— 'The jubilation of a section of the people of Paris and Germany over Methuen's mishap has raised a strong feeling here. No doubt that feeling of resentment prevails also in Canada and Australia. It is the intention of New Zealand to offer through Governor of the Colony another contingent of 1000 men. I believe that Canada and Australia will be willing to send further assistance. Time opportune. Do not miss offer of additional troops from over-sea dominions. It will have good moral effect at present juncture. Do not hesitate to accept and send every mounted man available. Increased mounted force will supplement Kitchener's splendid efforts, thus going far to end struggle at an early date. Pardon this obtrusive suggestion. Our earnest desire to see the war ended before next spring will, I hope, be accepted in extenuation.' Mr. Chamberlain replied as follows:— 'Telegram to the Earl of Ranfurly. Communicate following to Premier in reply to his telegram.—I most cordially appreciate splendid spirit of patriotism shown in your offer, following, as it does, on so many previous proofs of loyalty and affection of Government and people of New Zealand.' On the following day the Earl of Ranfurly (New Zealand) wired to Mr. Chamberlain, 'My Government desire to offer tenth contingent 1000 strong on same terms as last two.' Mr. Chamberlain replied, as of course he was bound to do, cordially accepting the offer thus thrust upon him. Mr. Seddon's action in this matter has been most high-handed and objectionable. He is Premier of the Colony it is true, but that certainly does not give him the right to virtually force upon the Home Government on practically his own responsibility and at his own sweet will a further heavy drain of men from this country. His references also to Canada and Australia are in the worst possible taste and furnish splendid examples of 'how not to do it.' The people of this Colony and even those opposed to Mr. Seddon's politics, have a certain admiration for his individuality and force of character but they don't like to see him making himself and the Colony ridiculous. It is sincerely to be hoped that by the time he comes back Mr. Seddon will have learnt the necessity for very considerably 'slowing down.'

Orange Tactics in Timaru.

We learn from a subscriber to the N.Z. TABLET that a petty and contemptible attempt to arouse the demon of religious bigotry in Timaru was organised by the dark lantern fraternity on the eve of the recent school committee elections. The meeting of householders for the purpose of electing a school committee for the year was held on a Monday night and on the previous Saturday a scurrilous and abusive leaflet, professing to deal with 'The Education Question' but in reality being a general all-round attack on the Catholic Church, was distributed in the streets by a representative of the Orange party. The leaflet is in itself essentially insignificant and contemptible and we only notice it at all for the purpose of administering a passing kick to clear the unclean thing out of our way. The writer is a typical Orangeman—a sort of intellectual epileptic, bigoted, unscrupulous, empty headed, and hysterical. He is precisely the sort of man that Josh Billings had in mind when he remarked, 'How menny men there is who argy, just as a

bull dus, chained tew a post; they beller and paw, but they kant git away from the post.' The Orange writer scribbles and raves and 'bellers and paws,' but he 'kant git away' from the post of ignorance, abuse, and bigotry, to which his congenital lack of brains has permanently tethered him. Outside of the childish and drivelling abuse which, as we have said, makes up the greater part of this leaflet the only portion which calls for the least attention is a reference to certain alleged 'statistics' on the subject of Catholics and crimes. The writer takes the case of England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, and gives certain figures to show that the proportion of Catholic criminals is greater than that furnished by any other religious body. As to these figures we remark (1) The writer names no year for which they are given; (2) no book, writer, or publication of any kind is mentioned as being authority for the figures, and (3) the statements bear conclusive internal evidence of being unreliable and 'faked.' Thus the writer says: 'In Ireland they (the Roman Catholics) are *one-half* of the population, yet they furnish six criminals to one for the Protestants.' The population of Ireland according to the last census as quoted in the *Statesman's Year Book* for 1900 is in round numbers 4,700,000, out of which according to the same authority no less than 3,500,000 are Catholics. The man, therefore, who states that the Catholics are only one-half of the population in Ireland writes himself down at once as a descendant of Ananias, whose unsupported statements are worth simply nothing at all. As to the general question of Catholics and crime it would require a great deal of time and space to deal fully with the matter, and we do not feel called upon to do so for the benefit of an anonymous Orange scribbler. For the present we content ourselves with making two remarks. First, it is well known that criminals make a regular practice of giving false names and false statements as to their religion; and the Irish people and the Catholic religion are special sufferers in this respect. And, secondly, in settling the question of comparative national morality there has to be considered not merely the quantity of crime in a country but, above all, its quality—the proportion of grave to minor offences, etc.—and if this distinction be borne in mind it will be found that Catholics are singularly free from those serious crimes and grave offences against morality which furnish the real test of the moral condition of a people.

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Especially is this the case in regard to crimes against chastity, the absence of which is generally admitted to be distinct evidence of the restraint of moral and religious principles on the home life of a nation. The writer of this leaflet by another batch of bogus figures referring to Continental cities (no year being assigned and no authority given) tries to show that the proportion of illegitimate births is much greater in Catholic than in Protestant populations. As we have shown over and over again, the exact opposite is the truth, and it is one of the crowning glories of the Catholic Church that in the countries where her influence has full scope the standard of female purity is far above that prevailing in countries where Protestantism holds sway. Here are some statistics on the subject, and it will be noted we give official or recognised authorities for all our figures. Let us take England, Scotland, and Ireland first for our comparison—countries, by the way, which the anti-Catholic writer carefully avoids.

'The Registrar-General's reports for 1898 for the United Kingdom,' says a recent C.T.S. leaflet, 'are open before us as we write; and from them we gather that the proportion of the illegitimate births for England is 42 per 1000; for Scotland, 6.8 per cent.; for Ireland, 2.7 per cent. Let it be noted that Ireland, where, assuredly, the confessional has full sway, stands in a noble pre-eminence, and that Scotland, the type of unswerving and unadulterated Protestantism, comes lowest on the list.'

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And not only does Catholic Ireland stand at the bottom of the list as regards percentage of illegitimate births, but in Ireland itself, as between the Catholic and Protestant provinces, the excessive ratio is always in the Protestant provinces. The most Protestant province in Ireland is, of course, Ulster, its non-Catholic population being 52 per cent. of the whole, as against 14 per cent. in Leinster, 6 per cent. in Munster, and 5 per cent. in Connaught. The Registrar-General's returns give the following figures for the respective provinces:—

Ulster ...	..	..	37	illegitimate per 1000 births
Leinster ..	..	..	26	" " "
Munster ..	..	..	24	" " "
Connaught ...	..	..	6	" " "

Thus Protestant Ulster has no less than 37 illegitimates per 1000 births, while Catholic Connaught has only 6. The superior virtue of the Catholic population is still further emphasised by the remarkable fact that even in Ulster itself the percentage of illegitimate births rises and falls with the rise or fall of the Protestant population in the various counties of the province. Returns from the separate counties have not been published since 1891, but the following table (which has appeared before in our columns) was specially compiled for the N.Z. TABLET from the statistics of that year:—