

they please, and overbear by immense majorities anything that we can do in Parliament. It may be so, but even if we are defeated in Parliament our resources are not exhausted. We have taken no money from anyone to help in the teaching of our own denominational views. We cannot consent that our money should be applied to the teaching of religious views from which we vehemently dissent without any real popular control or power of protecting our own interests.

We defy anyone to show that even the semblance of a grievance is here disclosed, for the *British Weekly* knows perfectly well that the ratepayers' money about which it is so frightened is not applied to the teaching of any religious views at all but is purely and simply a payment for the secular instruction given in the denominational schools and for nothing more. The truth is that the Nonconformists are split up into so many sects that they could not well have denominational schools of their own and they are jealous and annoyed that other religious bodies should enjoy what their own divisions prevent them from obtaining for themselves. It is a dog-in-the-manger exhibition of the worst possible kind, and it is satisfactory to note that this ignoble opposition has met with the discomfiture and defeat which it undoubtedly deserved.

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There can be little doubt that the success of this Bill will greatly strengthen our hands in the great battle which we have been fighting, and have yet to fight, in this country. The adoption of such a scheme by the greatest deliberative assembly in the world is a fact the moral influence of which it is almost impossible to over-estimate. It will surely at last stop the mouths of the political pigmies who prate about our claims being impracticable and impossible, and will put an end to the foolish idea that the grant of justice to Catholics will undermine and split up our great (so-called) national system. Moreover, the English proposals constitute a splendid vindication not only of the desirableness but of the absolute necessity of denominational schools in the interests of religious freedom. 'Whatever may be the origin of the present state of things,' said Mr. BALFOUR in introducing the measure, 'we have as a community repudiated responsibility for teaching a particular form of religion; we equally assume responsibility for teaching secular learning. As we have thus left to the parent the responsibility in this matter surely we ought, in so far as we can consistently with the inevitable limitations which the practical necessities of the case put upon us, make our system as elastic as we can in order to meet the wishes of the parent. I do not stand here to plead for any particular form of denominational religion. I do stand here to say that we ought as much as we can to see that every parent gets for his child the kind of religious education he desires.' These are noble words, and the victory of the great principles which they express should come as an inspiration and as an incentive to us to 'keep the flag flying' and to throw ourselves into the old struggle with untiring energy and with new-kindled courage and hope.

Notes

The Girdle Round the Earth.

The New Zealand end of the new Pacific cable has been duly landed, and this Colony is now in telegraphic communication with a number of localities not hitherto within reach of the pulse that vibrates under the ocean. But it will take some little time yet to complete the chain that will connect the Australasian colonies with the Mother Country. The actual work of laying the cable between Australia and Britain *via* Canada will be begun towards the end of this year. The total length of the new cable, including 10 per cent. allowed for 'slack,' will be about 8000 nautical miles. The longest uninterrupted stretch is that from Kelp Bay, on the south coast of Vancouver, to Fanning Island, which is about 3561 miles. From Fanning Island to Suva, in Fiji, is 2093 miles; from Suva to Norfolk Island, 961 miles; and from Norfolk Island to New Zealand 537 miles. It may be of interest to point out that even the electric spark is not superior to the obstacles created by distance. The time taken by a pulsation increases with the length of the cable in proportion to the square of the distance. For example, if it takes the signal one second to travel 1000 miles, it will take four seconds to travel 2000 miles, nine seconds to travel 3000 miles, and so on. Not

only is this so, but the carrying capacity of a wire depends upon the dimensions of the 'core' and its insulating gutta-percha or India rubber. The thicker the copper wire and coating the greater the speed. The longest section of the cable—that between Vancouver and Fanning Island—will have a heavy 'core' and will carry seven or eight words a minute, and this will be the speed of through messages. By Dr. Muirhead's duplex system two messages, one from each end, pass through the wire at once, but this is not such a great gain as might be supposed, because only a few business hours in the day are common to the two hemispheres. On some land lines the quadruplex system is used, and by it four messages—two from each end—may pass simultaneously. No doubt readers have watched with interest the protracted negotiations that have led up to the construction of the Pacific line. It was primarily conceived for the purpose of getting rid of the monopoly created by the companies who owned the eastern lines, and of obviating the frequent interruptions arising on the immense stretch of land line through the barren regions of Western Australia. There afterwards arose the additional necessity for an 'all red' line that would be solely under British control in the event of international war. The net result must be such additional security as a cable can afford in time of trouble, and a much cheaper medium of communication when times are peaceful.

Memorable Dates.

The current week is more than usually pregnant with the recollections evoked by anniversaries of important events. Four years ago last Monday Gladstone, the greatest commoner of British history, closed a long and eventful life of nearly 89 years, at Hawarden, and was laid to rest amid the tears of a nation. It is the fashion at the present moment to belittle the memory of Gladstone, and to attribute to his action the chain of events which are said to have led up to the present war in Africa. That, however, is a matter which history will set right, and Gladstone will be restored to that pre-eminence of distinction that his statesmanlike qualities deserve. It may yet be admitted that in the matter of Home Rule his instinct was right, and when that comes to be considered perhaps it may be seen that he was not so far wrong with respect to Africa. Tuesday was the anniversary of the death of Columbus, who after giving to the world a new continent in 1492, died 14 years later. The history of Columbus is that of nearly all men of genius. And he was the product of his time. The maritime nations of Europe, of which Spain was then the greatest, had begun to 'feel' the proximity of America. If, as is commonly believed, he set out to reach India, he must have known from his position that it was of immensely larger extent than supposed, seeing that he was not then half way. Therefore the magnitude of the discovery, and the fulfilment of the dreams he had cherished despite all opposition, awed him the more. Sixty-two years ago on Wednesday New Zealand emerged into the sunlight of the nations as a Colony. Settlement dates from a period much earlier, but such administration as there was came from the parent colony of New South Wales. The seat of Government was at Auckland, where the metropolitan fiction is still preserved by the maintenance of a vice-regal residence. The proclamation of the Colony was the advance note of a wave of organised settlement by the New Zealand Company. That is only 62 years ago, and the pakeha maintained a precarious foothold on the shore, the interior, at all events of the North Island, being held by ferocious Maoris. Now the Maori and the pakeha dwell peaceably side by side. And there is room for sanguine hope that the aboriginal race will survive the contact with the white man that has hitherto been fatal. Had Queen Victoria lived until Saturday next she would have been 83 years of age. She died only last year, and already her birthday has been obliterated from the list of holidays.

Lord Hopetoun's Salary.

Lord Hopetoun finds his position as Governor-General of the Australian Commonwealth untenable because his salary is only £10,000 a year, Parliament having deliberately refused to vote the additional £8,000 asked for by the Government. Lord Hopetoun, in asking for his recall after the Coronation, says he anticipates grave difficulties for his successors, as no allowance whatever will be given beyond the £10,000 per annum. He has been expected to pay the staff, visit the various States, pay all travelling expenses except railways, pay for lighting, fuel, stationery, telegrams, postage (other than official), dispense hospitality, and maintain the dignity of his position. In doing so he has strained his private resources beyond justification. At this juncture it will be of interest to quote the emolument given to some other men. The President of the United States, who rules over 70 million people, has an annual salary of £10,000, and the Vice-President £1600, or £150 a year less than the sum received by the secretary of the Wellington Harbor Board. The Governor-General of Canada receives £10,000 per annum, and the Premier £1600. The President of France receives