

electors, be laid before the House in order that our representatives might be heard thereon. The forms of petition were received from the printers on Saturday, signed by his Grace Archbishop O'Shea, Bishop Cleary, and 2485 other electors on Sunday, and presented to Parliament on its first sitting day (Tuesday) thereafter. The earnest wish of our people generally to return to Parliament only those who would oppose the Referendum Bill in regard to religion in State schools has materially assisted in the election of a very substantial majority of members pledged to resist the passage of any such measure.

Members will learn with pleasure that the crusade against impure and anti-Catholic literature has been vigorously prosecuted, and that success has attended the efforts of your Federation in this regard. The prompt action taken in respect to an obnoxious article in the magazine *Success* produced an ample and complete apology, which was published in the columns of the *Tablet*. In another case, the details of which have been also published in the same journal, the drastic action of your executive practically forced the authorities to prosecute the author and publisher of a most disgusting and loathsome leaflet known as 'The Restorationist.' The result of this prosecution was the infliction of fines and costs amounting in all to some £17. Your Executive has received warm congratulations alike from non-Catholics and our own people upon the successful stand taken in this matter. Federation officers in all the towns have evidenced great care in regard to the bookshops and libraries in their respective districts and the result of their tactful representations has been very marked. In fact it is now a rare event to find obnoxious or anti-Catholic works exposed for sale, save in such shops as especially cater for the dirty class of trade, and to which no respectable person would be likely to go.

The Literature Committees of the Auckland and Dunedin dioceses have continued to do most effectual work and have given very useful hints and advice as to suitable works of an educational nature.

Your executive has been in communication with the Catholic Federation of Westminster, England, with reference to the circulation within the Dominion of impure and anti-Catholic books published in England, and has been assured of the sympathy and co-operation of that body. The English Federation is, during this month, to have a lecture by Mr. Hilaire Belloc on the necessity of an International Press Agency, of which the British Colonies, Commonwealth, and Dominions so greatly feel the need. Mr. W. P. Mara, secretary of the Westminster Federation, states that after the lecture it is hoped that the agency will be established in London, and that your executive will give the project every assistance.

The bureaux at the head office have been very much in request, but the usefulness of the accommodation bureau has been hampered by the fact that the demand for middle-class accommodation in board and lodging, both as regards visitors and permanent, particularly in the case of cadets coming to Wellington to join the Government service is far in excess of the supply. Many employers have been supplied with employees by the employment bureau, and there is always a large demand for domestic assistants, and in a lesser degree for farm hands, both boys and men, which demand cannot at present be supplied. The immigration bureau has had a very successful term. All oversea steamers have been met by the Immigration Committee, and the new arrivals desiring employment have been speedily placed in good situations. The thanks of the executive are tendered to the ladies in all parts of the Dominion who have, in response to telegrams of advice, met the oversea girls and looked after them on their arrival from Wellington. The Catholic Immigration Committees have also been engaged in looking after the spiritual and temporal welfare of many young girls arriving from other parts of the Dominion, but are hampered by the lack of accommodation. It is understood that the Auckland and Christchurch committees are contemplating the establishment

of hostels under efficient charge, and the Wellington committee has instituted enquiries as to the provision of such an institution. The initial expense need not necessarily be very large, but it is feared that unless some of our well-to-do girl friends will lend their aid this most desirable project must be deferred until the financial outlook is brighter, but it is certainly a serious position that Catholic girls should be obliged to enter the hostels provided by other institutions.

Your executive is deeply thankful for the good work done by Very Rev. Dean Regnault, S.M., who, on his recent visit to England and Ireland called on a number of clergy and laity interested in immigration, and put the needs of Catholics coming to this country before them, with a scheme whereby the organisations under their control—e.g., Federation, Catholic Women's League, Hibernian Society, etc., could co-operate with our Catholic Immigration Committee in New Zealand in the work of caring for emigrants.

Samples of the leaflets and pamphlets by the English Catholic Truth Society referred to in last report have now arrived and are of a most serviceable nature. The price is very low, ranging from sixpence, to three and sixpence per hundred, and it is hoped that parish committees will see the desirability of expending portion of their funds on the purchase for free distribution at the church doors of a number of the leaflets, which are most instructive and educational on matters respecting which questions are often asked by the non-Catholics. Parish and branch secretaries have been communicated with and samples forwarded with a recommendation that supplies should be obtained through the Dominion Executive. It is hoped that a large order can be sent to Britain, and that thereafter regular supplies will be required for distribution.

Since last report the disastrous war in Europe has broken out, and it is very pleasant to learn that our Catholic young men have risen right royally to the call of the Empire for fighting men. The quota of our young men who have volunteered and have left on active service is very high: indeed, considering that we can only claim one-seventh of the population, the proportion of Catholic soldiers in the Advance Guard of the first and second Expeditionary Forces, and now in the reinforcement detachments is most gratifying, and is a very satisfactory practical reply to the bigots who question the loyalty of our community. The executive recommends that the subscriptions of all members of the Federation on active service be considered as paid, in order that their membership may continue unbroken. It will no doubt be a comforting thought alike to the parents of our lads and the boys themselves that they are held in daily remembrance by thousands of their fellow Federationists throughout New Zealand. It may be mentioned that a liberal supply of religious literature was provided by the Federation for the use of our men while on the troopships, while the kindness of many friends enabled plentiful supplies of good secular books, magazines, and periodicals also to be put on board for their benefit. Regular supplies have also been sent to Samoa. The executive undertook to defray the cost of the necessary ecclesiastical outfit for the chaplains who were selected to accompany the forces, and with the assistance of grants from the Wellington clergy and from each of the Diocesan Councils (which are gratefully acknowledged), the priests have been adequately supplied with all necessities in this regard. The executive desires to acknowledge the courtesy and consideration of the Minister of Customs, who directed that the vestments and other requirements for our chaplains were to be admitted free of duty.

In connection with our schools, matters have been improved (by the 1914 Act) in respect to scholarships, and given a fair-minded Minister of Education our boys and girls will be able to take out any scholarships they may win at a Catholic secondary school, for our colleges and convent high schools must surely be approved by the Minister as 'equivalent' of any secondary school in the Dominion. The Minister declined to allow the winners of 'free places' to take them out at Catholic secondary schools, and also 'could not see his way' to