

at a meeting to which only those who are in favor of the policy of the bigots of the P.P.A. movement are admitted by ticket, Mr. Whyte's resolution received but little support. However, it had its effect: it proved to all that the sound and learned opinion of the ministers of the Protestant Churches are conscious that the time has come for them to fight openly the forces that make for dissolution and anarchy in New Zealand, and that they recognise that the only way to do this is by educating the young people in Christian schools. Further evidence of this fact is gathered from the following report of the Anglican Synod:—

"Napier, May 8.

"At the General Synod to-day, speaking on the question of reviving the Bible-in-Schools League, the Bishop of Wellington said that modern civilisation was merely nominally Christian, but was really heathen, with a tincture of Christianity. Religious education by convinced Christian teachers was necessary. Canon P. T. Williams ascribed all the social evils to the absence of religion from the education system. The whole-hearted support of Church schools was essential."

The State schools of New Zealand are not Christian. They are not even neutral. It was long ago decided in America that a school from which the teaching of Christ is excluded is anti-Christian and biased. The Government of this country supports, against the will of the majority of a Christian community, schools which are directly calculated to promote the irreligious and atheistical views of a minority. The Government supports schools which do not in any true sense educate at all, for apart from Christian views we have the clear testimony of French and English rationalists to tell us beyond doubt that secular schools utterly fail to form the characters of the young, and that their results are most injurious to the welfare of the nation. The heads of the French educational system frankly admit failure; they confess that without moral and dogmatic teaching as a foundation, the education of their schools ends in disorder and immorality. Education that tends to develop but one side of the character is fruitless. Learning may make a clever man, but it never makes a good man. Herbert Spencer, who is surely no prejudiced witness in our favor, says:—"Are not fraudulent bankrupts educated people, and getters-up of bubble companies, and makers of adulterated goods, and users of false trade marks, and retailers who have light weights, and owners of unseaworthy ships, and those who cheat insurance companies, and those who carry on turf chicaneries, and the great majority of gamblers? This belief in the moralising effects of intellectual culture, flatly contradicted by facts, is absurd *a priori*. How does knowledge of the multiplication table, or quickness in adding or dividing, so increase the sympathies as to restrain the tendency to trespass against fellow-creatures? In what way can the attainment of accuracy in spelling or parsing, etc., make the sentiment of justice more powerful than it was; or why, from stores of geographical knowledge, perseveringly gathered, is there likely to come increased regard for truth? The irrelation between such causes and effects is almost as great as that between exercises of the fingers and strengthening the legs." And Huxley, who is still less on our side, says:—"If I am a knave or a fool, teaching me to read or write won't make me less of either one or the other, unless somebody shows me how to put my reading or writing to good purposes." We have in the daily press as well as in the example of at least one advocate of secular schools appalling instances of the want of principle to which irreligious schools lead.

Catholics take a high stand in the matter of education because they fully realise the importance of right formation of character while the boy or girl is plastic and easily moulded for good or for ill. We hold firmly that the eternal interests of mankind are of first importance, and that it will profit a man nothing to gain the whole world if he suffer the loss of his immortal

soul. On that ground alone there is no room for argument when the education of our boys and girls is at stake. A parent who does not send his children to a Catholic school is not a true Catholic, nor is he fulfilling his obligations towards his children. Show us any Catholic parent who sins in this respect, and we shall have no hesitation in branding him as disloyal to God and to his own family. Apart from this consideration, we assert that our schools, handicapped and hindered as they are by bigots and unprincipled politicians, are superior to the State schools. The results are the test. No schools in the Dominion have better averages than ours; none impart anything like so thorough a culture and so whole a training. In mental training, in manners and morals, and no less in athletics, we are able to hold up our heads and challenge competition. So much so that the person who so fitly represents the narrow and sciolist secular system was laughed to scorn even by the secular press a short time ago when he tried to defend a characteristic action of his by the silly and transparently false excuse that one of our schools was "inefficient." However, the question mainly concerns souls. Secularism knows nothing of souls, and parents who support it care very little about them. To our own, and to those of other Churches who do believe that there is a God above us, we put it that the time has come for all true Christians to make common cause against the irreligious propaganda to which the wretched politicians of the Dominion have sold themselves. In plain terms, it comes to a question as to whether or no we realise our duty to God and to the children on whom the future of the country depends.

NOTES

E. Temple Thurston

Apropos of a letter from a correspondent concerning a book by this writer, a few remarks may not be out of place. Mr. Thurston is a popular novelist, and he does Ireland the doubtful honor of placing the scene of most of his stories there. A man who wears red glasses sees red, and an old scholastic maxim says that whatever is received into the mind is received according to the manner of the recipient. Therefore if we want to find out how reliable a writer's views on anything are, it is important to know something about the writer. Without going into the matter deeply, let us simply say that Mr. Thurston is totally unfitted to understand the Irish character, and that his materialism and his unspirituality color his vision deplorably. His books, besides, are shallow and unreal, and as portraits of Irish life they are worth exactly nothing. We are not unduly hard on this writer. Let those of our readers who have read *Traffic* recall its sordidness and its coarseness. When we remember it we cannot help associating it with a certain divorce case which came off about the time the book fell into our hands. That divorce case explained many things. Mrs. Thurston, who as a Cork girl, née Katherine Madden, wrote a few Irish novels which are incomparably better reading than her husband's. We have said enough, and left enough unsaid, too, for our readers to gather why we do not like Mr. Thurston's books, and why we do not want our readers to like them.

The Thomas Moore Anniversary

We heard with no little pleasure that preparations are in train to celebrate this year in Dunedin the Moore anniversary. It is the custom of supercilious critics to patronise Moore's poetry and to account it as very second rate, but it is only people with heart and head who can realise what Moore has done for Irish men and women all the world over. His melodies have fanned the flame of the national spirit in many an hour when the frosts of adversity bit hard and the skies frowned gloomily. To exiles from Erin what a holy spell his words have at all times, how their hearts leap at a verse of *Let Erin Remember*, and how near to tears they