

second ballot. Is this denial clear enough for you? If not, prove that I am wrong, and claim the £10. It ought not to be a too difficult task for your lynx-eyed and "reliable" correspondent.

'Statement No. 3, taken from the leading article you were good enough to devote to me in your issue of the 3rd inst., "That in Dunedin there was an organised attempt to influence the Catholic vote in favour of the Government candidates." This statement has a wider signification than the previous ones, as it refers to all the electorates in Dunedin. Taking it as referring to all or one, I deny its truth. It is absolutely without foundation. If you or your correspondent can prove it true, you may claim my ten pounds (£10), and it shall be given to you. As a notorious fact, in at least three of the Dunedin electorates Catholics were found voting and working on opposite sides, without let or hindrance of any kind, or any attempt to influence their votes by the church authorities. In Dunedin West, Mr. Millar's constituency, I freely admit that most, if not all the Catholics voted for him; but that they did so owing to any organised attempt on the part of the Catholic authorities to influence their votes, or because "the head of the Government was a Catholic," I absolutely and unqualifiedly deny. To my mind their votes for Mr. Millar were due to three reasons: (a) Mr. Millar's work in the interests of the Dominion; (b) Mr. Millar's work for the City of Dunedin; and (c) the abuse which they received from the other side. You will never win the Catholic vote by abusing their religion or most sacred institutions. Catholics have their full share of the spirit of self-respect and independence; and they are no more disposed than their neighbors are to fawn on and lick the foot that kicks them. Because I admitted that there were one or two Catholics (in their private capacity and in the exercise of their undoubted rights) on Mr. Millar's Committee—one man and two women as I now learn—you take it as an evidence of organised effort. Such argument reminds me of the "drowning man grasping at straws." There was an elder of the Presbyterian Church a very active member of his committee; and you have not accused the Presbyterian Church of undue influence in his favor. The chairman of Mr. Thomson's Committee, if I am rightly informed, holds a very high place amongst the church-workers in Dunedin; and you have not accused him or his church of undue influence. But because one or two Catholics in their private capacity worked on Mr. Millar's committee, herein you find a marvellous proof of "an organised attempt to influence the Catholic vote in favor of the Government candidates." In contrast to your action in this matter I may call your attention to the action of the two Dunedin papers. The position of the *Evening Star*, you will see in its leading article of even date. The *Otago Daily Times* has been all through the elections a most pronounced opponent of the Government, and it let no opportunity pass to secure the defeat of Mr. Millar. It had ten correspondents and reporters on the spot to your one, and yet from beginning to end of the elections not one word has appeared in its columns alleging that undue influence on the part of any person or religious body which was so apparent to your lynx-eyed "reliable correspondent." Your apology for having entered into a discussion on this subject—"that you did it in the interests of your Roman Catholic friends"—reminds me very forcibly of the story of the wolf and the lamb. The wolf abused the lamb, which was drinking down the stream, for polluting the water which his majesty the wolf had to drink. You started the discussion by publishing the canard about the West Coast priests; you added to your offence by introducing false information supplied by your Dunedin "unreliable correspondent;" you made an uncalled-for attack upon the Catholic Bishop of Christchurch, who, in the lawful exercise of his office, denounced the slander-mongers of the Dominion, and, because we have the courage to reply to your false statements and base insinuations, we are to be accused of raising the bug-bear of "Sec-tarianism in Politics." This is surely the most modern edition of the story of the wolf and the lamb. I am

immediately interested in your statement regarding Dunedin. I have now, for the third time, given that statement an absolute denial from every point of view. I have called upon you, and I now call upon you for the third time to withdraw it or prove it. If you prove it, I offer you or your correspondent ten pounds (£10). If you do not claim the money, your readers will know the reason why. By all the rules of logic you are bound to prove the statement, having made it. If you cannot prove it, by the rules of justice and honor you are bound to withdraw it and apologise to those whom you have unjustly accused. I shall now leave you to decide.—Yours, etc.,

'JAMES COFFEY,

'Adm. St. Joseph's Cathedral, Dunedin.'

'January 5.'

In the course of a leading article on the above letter, the *Press* says:—

'Father Coffey assures us, in effect, that the Church authorities had nothing to do with it [canvassing the Catholics on behalf of Mr. Millar], and we accept his denial without the slightest qualification or reserve.' The *Press* concludes by giving an 'absolute denial' to the statement that it made 'an uncalled-for attack on the Catholic Bishop of Christchurch, who, in the lawful exercise of his office, denounced the slander-mongers of the Dominion.'

Diocesan News

ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON

(From our own correspondent.)

January 13.

Mr. and Mrs. T. Dwan, who have been on a holiday visit to Australia, returned by the Moeraki on Wednesday.

The Sisters of Mercy will hold a garden fete at the Upper Hutt early in February, the object of which will be to provide funds for St. Joseph's Orphanage.

Mr. T. J. Lawlor, son of Mr. D. R. Lawlor, of this city, who has spent some years at Valparaiso, Chile, and who has been on an extended visit to Wellington, left on Friday by the Moeraki for Sydney.

The Ven. Archdeacon Devoy, S.M., of St. Anne's, Wellington South, has secured the old organ of the Timaru Church for use at St. Anne's. It is now being overhauled and will be erected at an early date.

The ladies of Thorndon are interesting themselves in the Marist Brothers' new school, now being erected in that parish. To raise the amount necessary to furnish the school a sale of work will be opened in the new school, which will be then finished, on February 1.

Owing to the halls in Wellington South now being utilised for pictures, the parishioners of St. Anne's find it practically impossible to organise any form of social or entertainment. Also, on the social side, it is felt that if these socials or entertainments were held it would be the means of bringing the parishioners in touch with one another. At the present time the South Wellington Catholics possess a small hall which is at present used as a club room. As there is plenty of ground available a movement has been set on foot to enlarge St. Anne's Hall to such an extent that it will no longer be necessary to depend on outside halls. It is proposed to have the enlargement completed in time for Easter, when the hall will be opened with a bazaar and art union.

By the Moeraki on Wednesday there arrived in Wellington, accompanied by the members of his concert party, Mr. John McCormack, who is the most famous ballad tenor in England at the present day. He is an Irishman, and when he arrived at the Grand Hotel on Wednesday afternoon he was accorded an enthusiastic welcome by a gathering of representatives of the Hibernian Society in Wellington, among those present being the Ven. Archdeacon Devoy, Very Rev. Father O'Shea, Rev. Fathers Hickson, Segrief, and J. Herring, Drs.