

mented a number who, rather than see the children get nothing, would do their utmost to see that the Bible had its place in the schools of this land.'

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To which the Rev. Mr. Hobday replied, in Saturday's *Evening Star*, with the following courteous but effective contradiction: 'Sir,—I am afraid that my presence at the recent Bible-in-schools meeting has given rise to serious misapprehension, and therefore that some explanation is needed. I told the Rev. R. E. Davies at our interview earlier in the day that I would be pleased to take part provided he would, as chairman, permit me to state my position. To this he assented, but although the hour was by no means advanced the opportunity was denied me. Whether, on reflection, he deemed it inexpedient, or whether he consulted others who deemed it inexpedient, I cannot say, nor am I anxious to ascertain. But, however well intentioned (and I am sure it was), the chairman's reference to myself was entirely gratuitous. *I am not anxious to join the League.* If it were purely and simply a Bible-in-schools movement there would be no more loyal or enthusiastic supporter than I. But is this a Bible-in-schools or a church-in-schools movement? I most sincerely want the Bible, but I object to the right of entry. Canon Garland's speech was weak and unconvincing. He took up the greater part of his time in extolling the excellencies of the Bible. Of course, we are all agreed there. I yield to no man in my passionate affection for the Book. But that is not the question. What I want to know is this: Are the League prepared, if needs be, to waive the right of entry and secure the Bible to the children to be read in the way described by Dean Fitchett—as literature? If they are, well and good; if they are not, then they ought to change their name. And if a referendum is to be taken, then common honesty demands that the two distinct issues should be submitted. I am certain that there is considerable confusion in the minds of numbers, and what is imperatively needed is a candid public statement of what the League demand—what their irreducible demands are. For myself, I want neither secularism nor sectarianism in the schools. I want the Bible read as the basis of morality.—I am, etc.,

E. HERBERT HOBDAY,
Roslyn Baptist Church.'

March 15.

'Free Places' in New South Wales

There was some speculation amongst New Zealand Catholics as to the precise meaning of a cable message from Sydney, quoting portion of a pastoral letter by Archbishop Kelly, which appeared in last week's dailies. The cable read as follows: 'A pastoral letter by Archbishop Kelly, dealing with the duties and responsibilities of parents in connection with State school scholarships, was read in the Roman Catholic churches yesterday. Reviewing the position, the Archbishop declared that "compromise upon the religious character of the school that is to be held by us Catholics is out of the question, and must be met with indignant rejection. Our only self-respecting attitude towards the present departmental insidious proposal is to say, 'Your free tuition in your newly-fangled higher shrine of indifference may go to perdition, so far as Roman Catholics are concerned.'''

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The following summary of the facts will explain the meaning of the message. Last year a Bursaries Act was passed in New South Wales under which State bursaries (or 'scholarships' as we call them in New Zealand) were made tenable at registered Catholic secondary schools as well as at the State institutions. In accordance with this Act examinations were recently held, at which 28 Government scholarships were gained by Catholic pupils, which are tenable at any of the 24 Catholic schools registered under the Act. But in addition, a number of free places can be awarded under the Act to pupils who have done sufficiently well at the examinations, and these carry with them free tuition and books, but they can only be held at State High

Schools. Some 40 or more of these free places have now been offered to certain Catholic pupils in terms of a circular sent out by the Education Department. The circular reads:—'It has been decided that a place will be found in one of the Sydney High Schools or intermediate high schools for all metropolitan pupils whose examination results reach the standard for scholarships (free places), but who are over the prescribed age, provided the parents are willing to allow them to remain long enough to complete the High School course (four years). At examination your marks were sufficiently high to reach the scholarship (free place) standard. If therefore, you have not yet entered upon a course of secondary instruction, the Department is prepared to find a means of enabling you to do so, upon your father or mother filling in the accompanying form, and returning the same to this office. This offer must be availed of not later than Friday next, 21st inst.' To counteract this plan—as we learn from our Adelaide contemporary, the *Southern Cross*—the Catholic Federation, which has just been formed in Sydney, aided by the Bishops, is raising a fund by which Catholic pupils offered this free secondary education at State high schools will be given similar advantages at Catholic secondary schools. The free places are, of course, more numerous than the scholarships; and if the former are to be tenable only at the State high schools the effect of their acceptance by Catholics would obviously be to rob the Catholic institutions of a large number of their best and most promising pupils and to compel the latter to take out their free places at institutions of which, on the ground of their purely secular character, Catholic parents could not approve. This is the explanation of the Archbishop's condemnation, and of the reason why, with his customary outspokenness, he has intimated that the insidious offer 'may go to perdition, so far as Catholics are concerned.' There, as here, an amending Act is evidently urgently necessary.

'The Woman Thou Gavest Me'

Our attention has been directed to a serial story by Hall Caine, entitled 'The Woman Thou Gavest Me,' which is appearing twice weekly in the *Southland News*. Hall Caine, who announced some time ago that he did not claim to be either Catholic or Protestant, seems to be unable to satisfy either Protestant or Catholic taste in stories in which either Church is represented or involved. Reviewers—Catholic reviewers included—differed greatly over Hall Caine's previous book, *The Eternal City*; and the author complained that he was 'a target for Catholics and non-Catholics alike,' and that the book had 'been denounced by Protestants as being Catholic, and by Catholics as being Protestant.' So far as we can see, Protestants are not likely to have any ground for complaint in respect to the Catholicity of the present story. We have only had the opportunity of reading a few disconnected chapters, but these are sufficient to show that, from the Catholic point of view, the story is distinctly objectionable. In the first part of the story we have presented to us, as the central characters in the plot, an Irish Catholic parent, the Reverend Mother of a convent, a Catholic Bishop, and the Vatican itself, all in a conspiracy to ~~fo~~fo a young Catholic girl, against her will and inclination, to marry a young lord who is immensely wealthy, but who is a Protestant and a *roué*. The absurdity of this picture, when the echoes of *Ne Temere* are still heard in the land, is patent to all; and in regard to its untruthfulness we are able to cite Hall Caine as witness against himself. At the opening of a Catholic bazaar at Douglas, Isle of Man, a few years ago, speaking not as the creator of fiction but as the relater of sober fact, he gave the Church her true place not as truckler to the rich but as the friend, *par excellence*, of the poor. 'Of all the Churches,' he said, 'the Catholic Church is the Church of the poor. This ought to be its great honor and pride. A Church of Christ that casts in its lot with the rich and great against the poor and lowly would be a Church built on the sand. The Catholic Church can well afford to be true to the democratic teaching of its Founder. It can only live on being the Church of the people. His Holiness sees this clearly, and hence his Encyclicals on Christian Democracy.'

Bird and Jansen

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