

Southland:—Dunedin, Rev. Father Coffey, Adm., Bros. J. J. Marlow and J. Hally; Invercargill, Bro. T. Pound; Oamaru, Bros. Cooney and Corcoran; Milton, Bro. F. Calvey; Gore, Bro. M. Francis; Port Chalmers, Bro. F. Doolan.

The ladies of the St. Vincent de Paul Society are considerably hampered in the carrying on of their work, owing to the want of a sewing-machine, and, as the funds on hand are not sufficient to permit of the purchase of one, they would feel very grateful to any generous benefactor who would make them a present of such a useful and necessary aid in their meritorious work.

BIBLE IN SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS

The following letter by his Lordship Bishop Cleary appeared in the *New Zealand Herald*. Under No. 4 paragraph his Lordship replies to the query: 'Why do Catholic teachers join the service, knowing what they have to do in the matter of "religious instruction"?'—

Sir,—No official of the Bible-in-Schools League has attempted to justify, on grounds of moral right, the League's seven controverted proposals. Let us take one clear-cut issue.

1. So far as may be gathered from their organised and official pronouncements, the State teachers of New Zealand object by six to one to the League's proposals.

2. The League affirms the moral right of the Government (as in parts of Australia) to compel these conscientiously objecting teachers, 'irrespective of creed,' to impart, as State agents, what is legally designated 'religious instruction' and 'general religious teaching.' This 'religious teaching' is placed on 'exactly the same footing' as geography and grammar, and, therefore, under 'exactly the same' penalty (dismissal) for refusal. This alleged moral right is denied by the universal voice of Christian teaching and by all that is upright in paganism. This denial holds good until the League denominations prove, as a League, what, as denominations, they deny.

3. If the Government has the moral right to coerce teachers' consciences, has it not equally the moral right to coerce the consciences of other Government officials, and of non-officials? If the Government has the God-given right to deprive the teachers of salary and pension for refusal to conform, has it not equally the moral right to deprive the voter of his vote, the worker of his cottage, the grocer of his stock, and the settler of his farm, for the high crime of non-conformity to the proposed Established and Endowed State Church? The League's anti-Christian doctrine is, in principle, a justification of every form of tyranny and oppression to which conscientious objectors have been subjected by Governments down the course of ages. The League would deprive a vast body of New Zealand teachers of rights of conscience which are enjoyed even by those unspeakable criminals who were lately sentenced to lash and prison at criminal sessions in this Dominion. What moral right has any League or any Government thus to discriminate against a law-abiding and honorable section of the community? The League dares not say.

4. Part of the League's scheme is a huge system of State bribery of objecting teachers' consciences by the lure of pay and pension. Many naturally objecting teachers would refuse the bribe, like the one who testified in your issue of March 18. Others of them would enter the profession as some people enter Matrimony and some frogs enter wells—without considering the risks. Some would take the soldier's battle-chance, hoping they might be of the number of those who (as in large schools) escape this 'duty' of religious teaching. Some Catholics would compound with conscience by making the 'religious teaching' as perfunctory, or as Catholic, or as little anti-Catholic as they dare. Or (as happened, and was intended to happen, even in Ireland), other objectors would sell their consciences in the State conscience

market for a wage. Internal conformity of natural objectors would be, so far, proselytism by Act of Parliament, or (in dictionary phrase) 'conversion' to the Bible-in-schools 'doctrine' or 'system, sect, or party.' External conformity would be, so far, external proselytism, and hypocrisy in the service of the Lord! But even if 10,000 teachers thus sold their souls, it would not give the Government the moral right to bribe or force conscience. What moral right has any Government to force 40 denominations to pay for the State oppression of consciences, for the exclusive benefit of part of three or four denominations? It is like seething a kid in its mother's milk. How will League officials again evade these 'knotty points'?

* HENRY W. CLEARY, D.D.
Bishop of Auckland.

March 18.

THE CATHOLIC FEDERATION

WELLINGTON.

(From our own correspondent.)

The provisional Dominion Executive of the Catholic Federation met last Thursday evening under the presidency of Mr. Girling Butcher. Excellent reports of the progress of the Federation are still coming to hand daily. Some forty branches have now been established. Several branches report heavy enrolling, and in this connection the Hibernian Society, St. Vincent de Paul Society, and Catholic clubs and sodalities can do a lot in increasing the membership of the Federation. Our Catholic teachers also are in an excellent position to extend the Federation by encouraging the children to join, in fact the subscription was fixed at one shilling per annum to enable every member of each family to be enrolled. There is no age limit. The executive will shortly consider the advisability of issuing a leaflet explaining the objects of the Federation and appealing to Catholics to join.

By instructions from the provisional Dominion Executive of the New Zealand Catholic Federation, the secretary wrote Messrs. George Marlow, Ltd., the theatrical firm which is to tour the Dominion with the offensive play, 'The Monk and the Woman,' the following letter:—

'Wellington, March 12, 1913.

'Messrs. George Marlow, Limited.

'Gentlemen,—With reference to the production of the play known as 'The Monk and the Woman,' which you intend to produce in New Zealand, I have been instructed by the Dominion Executive of the New Zealand Catholic Federation to enter an emphatic protest against its production in New Zealand, and to inform you that Catholics throughout the Dominion have been warned not to attend any of the performances of this drama.

'We very much regret that you still persist in touring the Dominion with this play after so many strong and emphatic objections which our co-religionists in Australia have made against its productions. The play is offensive to Catholics, and it cannot be understood why a theatrical company who should cater for all classes of the community should be so tactless as to produce a play which is so abominably repugnant to us as Catholics.

'The grounds of our objections have been placed before you so forcibly and so ably by our co-religionists in Australia that there is no need for me to repeat them here, but simply to again, in conclusion, strongly protest on behalf of the Catholics of New Zealand.

'I am, gentlemen, yours faithfully,

'P. D. HOSKINS, Hon. Secretary.'

CHRISTCHURCH.

(From our own correspondent.)

The organising committee appointed at the inaugural meeting, and others interested in the move-



J. T. COOPER DENTAL SURGEON,

CNR. MANSE & PRINCES STS., DUNEDIN.

Advice Free. No charge for Extraction when Teeth Supplied.