

to adopt the view of this highly important subject held by my brethren of the Evangelical Churches. I yield to no man in my admiration and approval of the Bible as the source of the highest morality known to the human race. I regard the Bible as the Word of God, and for years have been endeavoring to bring my fellow Christians to realise the loss that the future citizens of this Dominion are sustaining through the denial to them of the early religious teaching which ought to be regarded as their birthright. But I believe that the programme of the Bible-in-Schools League is not the proper solution of the problem, and my reasons for so believing are three:—1. It does not safeguard the children from the malign influences of such teachers as might be sceptical, materialist, or profane. 2.—It places the heavy end of the work on the shoulders of the State school teachers; and 3.—It will in a very short time, if adopted, lead to the introduction of a religious test in the appointment of teachers.'

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'A few words under each of these heads. I do not say that I know of any teachers who fall into any one of these categories, but it is quite conceivable that there may be such teachers. There has been no test to determine what are teachers' views on religious questions, and, so far, what each teacher thinks concerning the Fundamentals of Religion is entirely his or her own affair. It is said, of course, that teaching of a dogmatic character is not to be part of the teacher's duties. Probably not, but who or what is to prevent the teacher who holds pronounced opinions contrary to revealed religion from casting doubt by scornful act or gesture (words are not necessary) upon things which are most surely believed among us? The teacher in his school is like the captain on the deck of his ship—it takes a strong man to interfere with him. Say what they will about teachers only being required to hear the lessons read, the teaching work will unquestionably fall upon the members of this profession, whose duties now are heavy enough, and a new syllabus which is promised for the beginning of 1914 will, if what we hear be true, tend nothing to the lightening of their load—rather the contrary. Look at the long lists of lady-teachers, and men too, who are constantly suffering from nervous breakdown as a result of their arduous work, and then ask if it is expedient to place more work upon them. Finally, I think most people will admit that the third proposition is true—the adoption of the League's programme would lead in the near future to the application of a religious test for teachers' appointments. That does not at present obtain except in districts where any one denomination or sect is particularly strong. But let us suppose a district in which say, Presbyterianism is largely predominant. Most probably a majority of the School Committee would be Presbyterian. A vacancy occurs in the teachership, and two names are sent on, one of a lady or gentleman of known Presbyterian leanings, and the other of an equally efficient teacher who is known to be a Roman Catholic. Would the issue be doubtful? I trow not. Nor would it be if the supposed conditions were reversed. I disapprove, then, of the handing over of the children's plastic minds to anybody and everybody who may chance to hold a teacher's certificate; I disapprove of any additions to the teacher's already heavy burdens; I disapprove of any measure which will impose a religious test upon persons who have entered the public service merely as teachers of secular subjects. That is to say, I disapprove of the League's programme.—I am, etc.,

'J. AITKEN.'

ST. MARY'S ORPHANAGE, AUCKLAND

We have received the following subscription for the building fund of St. Mary's Orphanage, Auckland: Mr. C. O'Brien, Stonyhurst, 6s 6d.

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DIocese of DUNEDIN

The annual meeting of St. Joseph's Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society (ladies) takes place in St. Joseph's Hall on Friday evening, August 15.

A euchre tournament in aid of the local stall at the forthcoming bazaar will be held in the Sacred Heart Schoolroom, North-east Valley, on Friday evening, August 8.

A successful euchre tournament in aid of the City stall at the forthcoming bazaar was held in St. Joseph's Hall on Thursday evening. The lady's prize was won by Mrs. Gray.

There was Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at St. Joseph's Cathedral on Sunday from the last Mass until after Vespers, when the usual procession, followed by Benediction, took place.

The Jubilee was proclaimed in the diocese of Dunedin at the 9 o'clock Mass at St. Joseph's Cathedral on Sunday, when his Lordship the Bishop read a Pastoral Letter on the Universal Jubilee promulgated in memory of Constantine's Edict of Peace.

There was a very large attendance at the euchre tournament, given in the Pavilion, St. Clair, on Tuesday evening to assist in the furnishing of the South Dunedin stall at the bazaar being organised in aid of the building fund of the Christian Brothers' new school. During the evening vocal items were given by Miss Samson and Mr. Perkins. The ladies' prizes were won by Mrs. Dickie and Miss B. Laffey, and the gentlemen's by Messrs. Brown and McGuigan.

LADIES' ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY, DUNEDIN.

On Friday evening a meeting of representatives of the conferences of the Ladies' St. Vincent de Paul Society in Dunedin and suburbs was held in St. Joseph's Hall. Mrs. Mowat was voted to the chair, and there was an attendance of about 30 members. The object of the meeting was the forming of a Particular Council in connection with the Superior Council in Adelaide, which is affiliated to the General Council in Bologna, Italy. The conferences represented were:—St. Joseph's (Dunedin), St. Patrick's (South Dunedin), Sacred Heart (North-east Valley), and the Immaculate Conception (Kaikorai). St. Mary's (Invercargill) intimated through its secretary that it wished to be affiliated to the Particular Council.

Mrs. Mowat in opening the proceedings explained the objects of the meeting, and referred to the special works which would be undertaken by the Particular Council, the principal being the conducting of Sunday schools in outlying districts and the forming of new conferences in various parts of the diocese.

Rev. Father Coffey, Adm., said he was pleased to hear that one of the duties to be undertaken by the Council would be the conducting of Sunday schools, as this was a very necessary and useful work.

After some further remarks it was decided to form the Particular Council, consisting of the five above-mentioned conferences, and the election of officers resulted as follows:—President, Mrs. J. B. Callan (Dunedin); vice-presidents, Mesdames J. J. Marlow (South Dunedin) and Timpany (Invercargill); secretary, Miss B. Laffey.

It was decided to hold a Council meeting every three months, the first to be in September next.

DIocese of CHRISTCHURCH

(From our own correspondent.)

As usual on the first Sunday of the month there was Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the Cathedral from the 11 o'clock Mass until after Vespers, when the customary procession, prior to Benediction, took place.

Satisfactory sums are being raised by social evenings for furnishing stalls in connection with the Cathedral fund carnival. The Addington congrega-

J. T. COOPER

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