

woman. In the same strain, Bacon said that while a little knowledge leads men away from God, deep learning leads them to Him. These thoughts occur to one under whose notice it has been brought that certain young medical students, who could hardly pass a Civil Service Examination, assume superior airs with regard to religion almost as soon as they have their elementary text-books placed in their hands. They verify Bacon's hard saying about the evil of a little knowledge; for, as their professors know well, little indeed is their learning. The airs and graces of Clarence-from-the-Cow-country are often a source of much amusement to citizens of Dunedin, but to contemplate how ignorance and arrogance mislead the poor little things is in no way amusing. One medical student who forgot before he began his professional studies more than most of the others will ever learn attributes their attitude to lack of brains and to weakness of character. With pride and delight they accept the ignoble teaching that they are descended from the ape, while the destructive criticism of their theories by masters such as Windle remain as much a mystery to them as if they were written in Sanscrit. Whatever else one may think of them, their existence confirms us in the opinion we have long held that a real course of Christian Apologetics in our secondary schools would be a great help to young boys and girls who are destined to plunge into a materialistic environment in which at present many of them sink to rise no more. Mere knowledge of the text of the *catechism* is good and necessary; knowledge of the *New Testament* is excellent; but something more is required.

Our Politicians

The more one reflects on the average inaninity and ignorance of our politicians the more one wonders why the country stands them. Why should men who are regarded in their own towns as failures be selected to represent the people in Parliament? Why should professional men who are at the lowest level be entrusted with the task of legislating for the Dominion? The low standard in this country impressed Lord Bryce so forcibly that he said hard things about us in his recent work; but no man can deny that he was even mild in his criticisms. At the present time, lack of principle, incapacity for clear thinking, servile obedience to the bosses, seem to be the only qualifications required in a Member of Parliament. We have for Prime Minister a person who was regarded as the least considerable and important among the Dominion Premiers. We have all around us obvious proofs of his incapability. And, ignorant and uneducated though he be, he shines like a star among the majority of the Cabinet Ministers with whom he has surrounded himself. Two agencies keep him in power: a press that is the last word in servility and unreliability; and an organisation of bigots, led by a person who was horse-whipped by a returned soldier for vile calumnies against his dead sister. On such foundations the Massey Government rests, and the people do not seem to realise what it means to them. The Government, such as it is, is the tool of the capitalists who dictate the policy of what is called the Reform Party. The public are the dupes of press and politicians. And between them all poor New Zealand is in a sorry plight indeed. From some points of view it is a consolation that things are going to become so much worse than even the blind will see later on. What has Mr. Massey's last tour cost the people of this Dominion?

Sir Robert Stout Again

New Zealand's statesmen ought never be allowed out of this country. At home a hireling press protects them from ridicule as far as it can, if not at all times with success. But when they get away where the press is less considerate their hopeless incapacity speedily becomes manifest to the world, which otherwise would know nothing of them except when a writer like Lord Bryce tells humanity what a poor, ignorant, ill-mannered lot they are at best. A paragraph in the *Christchurch Press* tells us that our venerable Chief Justice

has once more distinguished himself in the only way that distinction seems attainable by him. Surrounded by an admiring R.P.A. audience he opened his mouth in hopeless competition with Balaam's ass and told the rationalists several things concerning private schools in New Zealand which we regret to have to say did not go far to show that a New Zealand Chief Justice has even an elementary notion of what truth means. The Churches, according to Sir Robert, are stumbling-blocks in the way of education out here at the Antipodes. The Churches have failed to make good with their schools, he says. Private secondary schools seldom win scholarships, and Catholic private schools win none at all! Now we never had the remotest suspicion that our Chief Justice was distinguished as a man of law, and we imagine that few people in the Dominion ever had. But we used to think that he was a harmless, respectable old gentleman who, although terribly prone to putting his foot in it, had a considerable respect for the truth. If Sir Robert is reported correctly we must come to the conclusion that he has lost his senses or else that he is capable of saying deliberately what he knows to be a falsehood. Even in Sir Robert we cannot imagine crass ignorance of the fact that Catholic schools are well able to hold their own with any in the Dominion, just as Catholic boys are able to beat in open competition all the public schools, or nearly all of them, year after year in games and athletics. Take what view one likes of the matter the conclusion is not flattering to our touring statesman: either he is a very ignorant man who after a long lifetime knows nothing about the state of education in New Zealand, or else he is unprincipled enough to juggle with truth to curry favor with his hearers. In no sense can it be said that our Chief Justice is any credit to the Dominion. But in that he is on a level with the rest of New Zealand's statesmen and P.P.Ass. nominees. When Sir Robert comes back we trust the Catholic Federation will attend charitably to the education of this ancient humorist whom we have long regarded rather as a chief joker than as a Chief Justice.

Irish History Competition

Owing to various circumstances our Irish History Competition has been unduly postponed this year, but as the matter is important we must not allow it to lapse. Hence we have great pleasure in publishing the following letter which sets forth the questions to be answered and fixes the date by which the papers are to be sent in:

IRISH HISTORY EXAMINATIONS.

"To the Editor,

Sir,—In order to keep up interest in the study of Irish History, which was never perhaps more necessary than at the present time, I am willing to undertake the judging of the papers in conjunction with Father O'Donnell of Gore.

We suggest the following questions for the Sixth Standard and upwards:

1. Write what you know about the flight of the Earls, its causes and consequences.
2. Give an account of the Siege of Dunboy and the retreat of O'Sullivan Beare.
3. Write a short description of Grattan's Parliament and of the events of 1782.

For pupils in classes lower than the Sixth Standard:

1. Describe the Siege of Limerick, the Treaty and its violation.
2. Enumerate some of the Penal Laws.
3. Give a short account of the Rebellion of '98.

N.B.—Teachers are asked to select the three papers they consider best in each division and to send them to the *Tablet* Office before November 15.

"I am etc.,

"JAMES O'NEILL,

"Waikiki, September 14."

On the occasion of our last competitions the response was very encouraging as far as numbers went. The only fault we had to find was that in many cases

A. Newlan Hancock

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