

sion, the forms of constitutional government converted into a cloak for the plunder and enslaving of the people, presented a picture on which the eyes of honest men could not look without dismay.

What more natural, therefore, than that they should ask themselves, is it not time to stem this torrent, to trample out this plague, which is desolating the Continent, before it gains the ascendant in our own country? This, we believe, is the reason of the re-action, and all who love law and order will fervently pray that it may be lasting. We are not—we never have been—admirers of Mr DISRAELI, or of the old Tory party; on the contrary, our sympathies and our aid have always been given to the Liberal party; and Mr GLADSTONE we have regarded as a great and good man, though sometimes mistaken. But when we see the persistent attempts of the Secularist party, to conciliate which Mr GLADSTONE discarded his Irish supporters—when, we say, we see the persistent attempts of the Secularist party to destroy the faith of Ireland, and of all Christian people in the Empire—when we see one so influential in his party as Earl RUSSELL take the chair at a meeting convened for the purpose of approving of and encouraging the persecution of Catholics by the German Government—we are compelled to lay aside our likings and our sympathies, and rejoice in the triumph of a true principle, although its advocates are not everything we wish.

If Mr DISRAELI and his party could only divest themselves of the soreness they feel in consequence of the disestablishment of the Irish Protestant Church, and discard the Orange principles, according to which the Conservative party has ever administered the affairs of Ireland, his Government might rally round it almost the entire Irish representation. Were this to happen, the new DISRAELI Ministry would be the strongest that England has seen for very many years. But, otherwise, his majority of about fifty is too small to give much hope of his remaining very long in power. At the present moment conciliation would effect wonders for the Empire; but will there be conciliation? This is the great question, and we fear very much no such happiness is in store for the Empire. One great good, however, has been effected. Radicalism and revolutionary principles have been checked by the common-sense of the constituencies. There is one remarkable feature in the recent contest which is significant. The cablegrams tell us that the re-action has taken place chiefly in Scotland, Lancashire, London and Middlesex. The parts of England mentioned are precisely the places where the Catholic vote is strongest. May not this have turned the scales? The next news may bring us similar intelligence in reference to Scotland. In a close contest, the Catholic vote is decisive. We here may learn a lesson from this.

THE DUNEDIN ELECTIONS.

THE appointment of the late junior member of Dunedin to the Resident Magistracy of this City, renders the election of a Provincial Councillor and a representative in the General Assembly, necessary. Several candidates offered themselves for the vacant seat in the Provincial Council. As yet, there is only one for the representation in the Colonial Parliament.

Hitherto we have not said anything in reference to these elections, inasmuch as they do not interest us much. We are powerless to influence the electors, and an enemy is sure to be sent to both the Council and the House of Representatives. Under such circumstances it would be useless to expend ink and paper in discussing them.

As a matter of contemporary history, however, they deserve some notice at our hands. For the seat in the Council there were four candidates. Mr CHAPMAN is a new man, and his speeches to the electors show that as a politician his views are not yet fully matured. He may develop into something by and by, but at present he gives every indication that he is still a raw youth. Mr ISAACS is very pronounced on the land question. He shares this peculiarity with every new candidate for political honors. In fact everybody says he is most anxious to see the people settled on the land, and to lend a hand in effecting such a laudable object. From the Superintendent downwards, all our public men declare that the one thing of all others the most desirable, is the settlement of the people on the land. And as an evidence of sincerity on the part of hon. members, a new Land Bill to promote settlement is introduced each session, and largely discussed. A fine opportunity is thus afforded to our representatives to air their vocabularies, and speechify to Bunkum. There is no end of political philosophy and patriotism spouted. But somehow the people are not yet settled on the land;

somehow, too, when a few spasmodic efforts are made with this ostensible object, all the good land manages, of course by the force of natural gravitation, to fall into the hands of large proprietors or capitalists.

Notwithstanding perpetual legislation and billions of good intentions, the people who want the land to cultivate it, cannot get it on reasonable terms; and a landlord class is growing up here as surely as if the feudal system were legalised amongst us. Perhaps this is as it ought to be; perhaps the landlord system as it is in England, Ireland and Scotland, and as it is in no other civilised country, is the one best calculated to promote the peace and prosperity of the Colony, and the comfort and independence of the people. It may be so, but if so, it is strange that experience tells a different tale. For some time we have entertained the idea that there is really no sincere desire on the part of our leading politicians to settle the people on the land, except as tenants of great proprietors. Their object, it appears to us, is in the first instance to parcel out the country amongst a few rich men. We may be wrong, but we do not think that any proof of the contrary can be adduced.

The third candidate is Mr REEVES. On the all important subject of education he holds views that, under the circumstances, are fair and equitable. He says that personally he is in favour of secular education. This is to be regretted, and we hope for his own sake that he is like a good many others who, whilst helping to provide secular teaching for other people's children, are very careful to give their own a good sound religious education. It would, however, be wiser and more consistent to give to others what one gives to his own. On the land question we cannot agree with him: and so far from thinking it a calamity that the Crown has parted with the fee of so much land, our opinion is that it is a misfortune that a great deal more of the land has not been disposed of to small proprietors. Wherever throughout the civilized world there is the most general well being and the highest agricultural cultivation, there small proprietors abound.

Mr E. B. CARGILL is the fourth candidate. He is an old colonist, has served the Province often as Provincial Councillor. As a public man he is honourable and outspoken; he is intelligent, well informed, and in business enjoys the highest reputation for integrity. But his principles are not ours. On the land question his views are at least ambiguous. He advocates the reservation of really suitable agricultural land for *bonâ fide* settlement. But who is to decide what is agricultural land—the squatter or the intending agriculturist? No law is or can be perfect, but in our estimation the Canterbury system, though faulty in many respects, is better calculated to provide settlement than the Land Laws of Otago. If settlement be really desired, every man who wants fifty or one hundred or two hundred acres of land to reside on and cultivate, should be enabled to select all he wants, wherever he pleases, out of the unsold land of the Crown, provided only he can pay a reasonable price for what he requires. Almost every other system is only a disguised hindrance to settlement. On the education question Mr CARGILL is consistent and intelligible. He does not wish to disturb the Otago system, but sooner than give us for example, any aid out of the common taxation, he would compel us, as we object to a Presbyterian system, to aid in supporting a secular system which we abhor. We have called the Otago system a Presbyterian system, because it is such in effect, though not by the letter of the law. But it makes little matter by what name an injustice is called, so long as it is an injustice.

As to Mr BARTON, the only candidate who is as yet in the field for the vacant seat in the House of Representatives, our space will not permit us to say much. When speaking of this gentleman's pretensions to political honors and duties, we are reminded how he *did not present, as requested, the Petition of his Catholic constituents on the subject of education*. He says he had a legitimate reason. This, however, we shall not delay to discuss, though we differ from him, and shall at present content ourselves with the bare statement of the fact. On seeing his address in the morning papers, our memory called before us that beautiful picture of the "lawyer full of sweetness and light" given so eloquently in the 'Daily Times' a few days ago; and until the arrival of the 'Timaru Herald,' we had not fully made up our minds that the writer in the 'Daily Times' had not drawn the portrait of Mr BARTON. The 'Timaru Herald,' however, has dissolved all doubt. Our contemporary knows Mr BARTON well, this is evident, and from what he says of this learned gentleman, however true of Mr BARTON might be what the 'Daily Times' says as to