

Tough-shod over others. They should consider themselves as New Zealanders, and he hoped that their children would call themselves by that name. The affairs of the colony would never be thoroughly well managed until they had a legislature composed of native-born New Zealanders.

Mr Olliver asked whether it was just to free-thinkers and those who, as he did, looked upon all religions with abhorrence, to re-establish denominational schools.

Mr Stafford did not think that those who did not belong to any denomination would claim to have a special school. When Mr Forster introduced the Education Bill into the House of Commons some two years ago, he stated that it was a curious fact that in all the reports which were received, it was not the parents of the children who objected to religious education, but it was some outside persons who did so, and that statement was not contradicted. Of course if a sufficient number of such people as Mr Olliver referred to were to be found they could have a separate school, but if the views of each person were to be incalculated it would amount to every man maintaining a school for himself.

In reply to John Lewis, Mr Stafford said he considered the nation a mass of sects, and he looked upon "national" and "sectarian" as synonymous terms.

FALSE ACCUSERS.

THE 'Auckland Cross' accuses the Roman Catholic Church, and of course its adherents generally, of a very grave crime. They are, he says, opposed to all improvement—to all "progress" in morals and in politics, and in every department of literature, science and art—whether amongst themselves or others. To use his own words, or those of the 'Australasian,' which he endorses, the Roman Catholics are engaged in a "conspiracy," a world-wide conspiracy against "liberal progress and civil society." This serious charge is directed more immediately against the Roman Catholic hierarchy, it is true, but the Roman Catholic party also must be affected by it. What the Roman Catholic clergy believe to be their duty to God and man, the laity believe the same. The Roman Catholic clergy have not one set of principles and the laity another. If the Roman Catholic clergy be, as the 'Cross' will have it, engaged in a criminal conspiracy to arrest the progress of human society in all that is good, so are we of the laity.

Whatever may have been the faults or short-comings of Roman Catholics in past ages, it cannot be said of them with truth that they were either opposed or even indifferent to the progress of mankind in morals, knowledge, science, or art. The editor of the 'Cross,' as an educated man, can hardly fail to know how much the arts of architecture, sculpture, music and painting owe to men who professed the Roman Catholic faith. He must also know what has been done by Roman Catholics to advance the progress of astronomy, navigation, and other arts, and to encourage the study of the classics. He knows that the foundations of the British Constitution were laid by Catholic hands. He also knows that even in the present age Catholics are striving to the utmost extent of their means to educate their children in all that is good and profitable, and so to keep abreast of the other classes of the community, and that many of them are now honorably engaged in the diligent practice of scientific professions. Why then, knowing all this, should he repeat the hackneyed charge against us, that we are opposed to all progress, and are conspiring against the best interests of society? He must have a motive. Can it be a good one? Catholics are taught to believe, and it is to be hoped the editor of the 'Cross' also has been taught to believe that no motive, however good, can justify the uttering what is contrary to the truth. It is the more to be regretted that the editor of the 'Cross' should set himself to injure the character of Roman Catholics by the repetition of such absurd calumnies against them, because it is generally believed that he is a member of our Colonial Legislature, and, therefore, ought to be incapable of any act having the appearance of untruthfulness and dishonour. It is a pretty general opinion among the Roman Catholic community that those editors who, like the 'Auckland Cross,' circulate such injurious and absurd statements and surmises against us as those above referred to, do not themselves really believe in them—but that they are endorsed and published merely for sensational purposes, and because it "pays" to give currency to them. This is to form a very mean opinion of the morning Protestant newspaper press, and I for one am averse to concur in it. But how are such preposterous, absurd and injurious and insulting charges to be met by us? One thing, we must be careful not to meet these with angry, abusive, and offensive language. If our enemies succeed in provoking us to any thing immoral or illegal, half their battle is won.—Yours, JOHN WOOD, Surgeon, late H.M.S. Pitt street, Auckland, 2nd April.

THE TIDE TURNING: OUR PROTESTANT ALLIES.

AUCKLAND.

NOT only Catholics, but all men who object to force the conscience of their neighbor or to banish God and religion from public schools, may rejoice at Mr Reeves' recent success. No cause for despair. A candidate has just come forward for a seat in the House of Representatives as member for an important district in the province of Auckland. He boldly and manfully avows his determination, like your Mr Reeves, and our Superintendent, Mr Williamson, to defend the rights of conscience, and to set his face against the exclusion of religion from public schools. He will not ignore Catholic schools. He sees and admits that Catholics cannot in conscience send their children to mixed or secular schools; or any schools, in fact, except those under their own Bishop. He therefore thinks it unjust to force them to pay for the support of secular schools. Here is another proof that the tide is turning in favor of justice and denominational schools. Mr Troup, the candidate referred to, is a young gentleman of education and means, and of great public spirit. Though a Protestant, he shews himself to be more just to Catholics than some Catholics themselves are. If he fail to get a seat for Franklin, it is to be hoped he may succeed elsewhere—one day he must. Mr Troup is more apt to

represent the Catholic portion of the people than Mr John Sheehan, the present member for Rodney is, if we judge by their publicly expressed views on the education question. But in doing justice to Catholics, Mr Troup would do justice at the same time to Anglicans and other denominations. He is another instance of what is so often seen—that some of the best defenders of Catholic rights are independent and honorable Protestant gentlemen, whose sense of justice rises superior to all narrow sectarian prejudice or jealousy, and who will not stoop to fawn or seek for power at the expense of honor and conscience. I know of a case in which the collector declined to Catholics to pay the school rate because they were, as certified by the District School Board, supporting a school of their own. When would the Otago people have done anything so liberal? Are their schools not practically Presbyterian, while nominally purely secular. Honesty and sincerity before everything! It does not appear that the Catholics in the district of Franklin are taking means to ensure Mr Troup's return so far as their power goes, but possibly they may be doing so in a quiet way, and of course by "moral and legal means." It is when Catholics employ moral and legal means of political action that they are so formidable and give so much uneasiness to their enemies. It would seem that such men as the editor of the 'Lyttelton Times' think Catholics act a criminal, and presumptuous, and "insolent" part in combining to accomplish their ends by any means whatever, even by such as are legal and moral—especially in this colony, and ever when these ends tend to benefit others as well as themselves. To resist an unjust and unequal law, or to procure its abolition by Parliament in a moral and legal manner, if attempted by Catholics, is, according to the 'Lyttelton Times,' the Auckland 'Cross,' and 'Australasian,' a "criminal conspiracy" against "the laws and institutions of the country." This is too much, considering that the Protestant press is never weary of declaiming about liberty and the benefits of a constitutional form of Government. They now begin to discover that liberty and a constitutional form of Government are two-edged weapons which may cut not only against, but in favor of Catholics and their legitimate power. The Catholic Church is in fact, and ever has been, the best friend of civil, as well as religious liberty when its adherents are faithful to her principles—which they have not always been. Trace the history of the British Constitution, and you will find this to be the case. That Constitution was framed originally by Catholic, and not by Protestant hands. It has been altered many times and often, in many of its parts; but in essentials it remains as at first—Catholic still. It has been used for the best and abused for the worst of purposes; but it is when British and Irish Catholics are pure and powerful, as in our time, that we see this glorious Constitution being effectually used for the defence of the just rights of all classes—the high and the low, the Catholic and the Protestant together. The British Constitution is at once the most democratic of institutions and the most favorable to royal power and the supremacy of high rank. In this it resembles the Catholic Church, on the model of which it is framed. Even the chief of the Catholic Church is "elected," and so far is not a despot, but a popular favorite.

RELIGION AND ART.

In a debate in the French Assembly upon the estimates for the department of the Minister for Instruction, Worship, and the Fine Arts, Deputy Gavardie spoke thus of the decadence of Art in France:—

"Gentlemen," he said, "the old artists, those who have thrown so great a splendor over the history of art, the artists of the 14th, 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries, of whose names I need not remind you, were—and some among us may be surprised to hear it, but it is nevertheless true—theologians before they were artists." They were not doctors in Canon Law, but they had begun by seeking the true expression of art, that without which art becomes something mercantile and a mere trade. Technical skill is certainly not lacking in our day; the progress of the physical sciences has placed marvellous means of execution in the hands of artists. What have they made of them? They lack the inspiration of faith which animated the intelligence, the hands, the hearts of the artists of whom I just now spoke, and who had studied at that profound so true the true notions of art, for in the domain of intelligence everything is connected. How comes it that in the present day we have no great writers, no great poets; that at this moment there are no great men of letters in France? (Donals on the Left.) I know that we have had them; but do you know in what their strength consisted—the strength of those whose names you now invoke? Do you know whence they derived their inspirations? They had religious and monarchical inspirations, and Victor Hugo first among them." The Left laughed ironically, but could not deny this, for the early writings of the author of *Odes et Ballades* are there to prove it. Still insisting on the necessity of a high order of study as part of the education of a true artist, he referred to the want of dignity and elevation in the art of the present day, and said:—"We cannot walk through our streets and squares and promenades without meeting with very vulgar types of beauty. . . . (exclamations and loud laughter on the Left)—often gentlemen—and the expression I am about to use will not be metaphorical—with marble maidens (*filles de marbre*), who display rather too inamously. . . . (Hear, hear, from Deputy Pö-in and others.) I thank my honorable colleague for demanding silence on my behalf, but I know not how he will receive the expression I am about to use; I will say that those statues are rather too Republican in their style; and at this you need not be astonished, for they are *sans culottes*."

The Giunta, or commission for selling off Church property, have offered to assign 8,000 lire a year to the world known astronomer, the Jesuit Father Secchi, if he will consent to remain in Rome and take the charge, as formerly, of the Observatory of the Roman College, which the Government has taken into possession. But Father Secchi has refused. It is now sought to obtain his service for the Catholic University in Dublin. Father Secchi is already an honorary member of the royal Irish Academy. He speaks English; and if he accepts the overtures now made to him, he will be a welcome addition to Catholic and scientific society in Dublin.