

without an exception, pledged themselves to secure the people's land to the people. But these pledges remain unfulfilled to this day. True, land has been sold pretty extensively—Otago lately disposed of one fine block of 45,000 acres to one capitalist, a --millionaire; and Canterbury, not to be outdone in establishing, even in the infancy of the Colony, an exceedingly rich landed aristocracy, has sold hundreds of thousands of pounds' worth of her best land, to wealthy run-holders and other capitalists. Meantime the people who are hungering for land, that they may cultivate it, so that it might feed men instead of beasts, cannot get a rood. To be sure, now and then, and here and there a spurt is made, as in Otago, where a few acres are offered on deferred payments. But the value of the spurt may be estimated from the fact, that in very many instances, for one section there are ten applicants. Still, there are millions of acres of the Waste Lands of the Crown, paying a few pence an acre, and enabling a few to amass wealth at the expense of the many.

But who are principally to blame? Why the people themselves who have the remedy in their own hands, and yet allow themselves, to be jockeyed out of their rights by a few clever, scheming politicians. The electors themselves are most to blame; they have the power to redress their grievances, and they neglect to do so. It is hardly to be wondered at, then, that they find themselves deceived and wronged by the very men who so charmingly wooed and won their sweet voices on election days. Though we regret the deception for the sake of the community at large, we certainly cannot entertain much sympathy for the dupes, so often warned, and, after all, so often victimised. If the electors at the next general election would send their present representatives about their business, and entrust their destinies to new hands, something might be done. But there is not much hope of this. Clap-trap and beer are as yet, we fear, too powerful.

Then there is the vexed question of education. Mr VOGEL will, no doubt, introduce to the consideration of legislators his rejected Bill of last Session,—the Bill which has been rightly designated "The Duplicity Education Bill," which takes away with one hand what it bestows with the other; which settles nothing, and enables Provincial authorities and Councils to perpetrate the greatest injustice. The only effect of this Bill—as, indeed, of all laws establishing secular education—will be the destruction of Faith, which according to all deep thinkers, from COMTE to JOHN STUART MILL, is the ruin of civil society. In the present Parliament, Denominationalists are powerless. Madness has seized the hour, and is running riot. The voice of reason is unheeded for the present. It is our duty, therefore, in common with all who value religion, and believe in Christianity, to take note of the doings and sayings of modern Pagans—the Secularists of the age—lest by our help, connivance, or neglect, we make ourselves in any way responsible for the re-election of these men. The Catholic who votes for a Secularist incurs a grave responsibility indeed.

We have lately heard a great deal in denunciation of a Catholic block vote, and threats have been freely used. We have been told that such a proceeding on our part will lead to reprisals, and that no Catholic candidate will be returned to the next Parliament. Well, what then? In such an event shall we be worse off than we are at present? How many real Catholics are there in the present Parliament? How many genuine Catholics would have the ghost of a chance of being returned for any constituency in all New Zealand? Let echo answer. Men who, whilst calling themselves Catholics, disgrace the name by disloyalty to the Church, disobedience of her laws, contempt of her warning, and disrespect of her ministers, might have a chance of election here and there; but no Catholic who practises his religion, and is loyal to the Church, dare even stand on any hustings in the Colony.

What, then, can we lose by fidelity to our principles? Nothing, that we can see. But, on the other hand, we can gain a great deal; we can, by manfully acting up to our principles, gain the respect and sympathy of honest men of all classes and religions, and rid ourselves of the incubus of worthless men in the garb of Catholics. Suppose a man, calling himself a Catholic, but who never enters a Catholic Church, never receives a Sacrament, never stands up for a Catholic principle, who—on the contrary—goes about like a poor, paltry coward amongst his non-Catholic friends, whining over the tyranny of the Pope, the unreasonableness of the priests, their want of knowledge of the world—above all, of Colonial politics, and raises his hands in horror at the bare mention of the name of that firebrand—Bishop MORAN; suppose, we say, such a man should be returned for a constituency, of what

use, of what importance, would such a return be to us Catholics? Why such a representative would be a disgrace to us, our opprobrium, a scandal to all; and, depend upon it, before long, as he has already sold his religion, honor, and manhood for the poor honor of a seat in a Colonial Legislature, so he would soon sell his constituents of all denominations. No; let Catholic voters rest assured they cannot possibly lose anything really worth having by being men, and true to their principles; whereas, on the other hand, they cannot but gain a great deal that is well worth having.

### THE SAN FRANCISCO MAIL.

THE City of Adelaide with the English mail arrived at Auckland on the night of the 26th ult., five days over her contract time. The delay was occasioned by the detention of the Mikado four days at San Francisco awaiting the arrival of the Atlantic steamer, and a subsequent loss of time through some disarrangement of her tubes between Honolulu and Kandavu. The intelligence received by the mail is of a more than usually melancholy character, the record of the month's disaster and destruction of life being greater than that chronicled for some time past. Both in the Old World and in the New the calamities have been so numerous and so heart-rending that even in this far off land, removed by time and distance, we cannot read the particulars without being sorely distressed at the miseries and misfortune, to which, happily, we are such strangers. In England a violent hurricane and thunderstorm had passed over London and the Midland counties, scattering death and destruction in its withering blast; then we have the usual monthly item in the shape of a railway collision, in which upwards of forty persons were more or less maimed for life; and as if to complete the chapter of misfortunes, we read that grave fears are entertained for the safety of a steam troop ship bound from London to Madeira with a large number of passengers on board. But it is in America that the hand of affliction seems to have fallen the heaviest, and from all parts of the Union comes the wail of suffering and the cry of distress. In the North, three villages have been swept away by the bursting of a reservoir in Massachusetts. It appears the dam had been used for mill purposes, the employes at which lived in the valley beneath. Suddenly and without any warning the walls of the reservoir burst, and the irresistible torrent rushed upon its work of destruction with frightful rapidity. Three villages opposing its onward course were swept away, and nearly two hundred persons hurried into eternity. The report of the catastrophe is of a most appalling character, almost all traces of the ill-fated villages have been obliterated, four hundred families have been rendered homeless and destitute, and property to the extent of over a million of dollars destroyed. From the Crescent City also, an appeal for assistance is heard. Louisiana, situated on the banks of the Mississippi, is subject to periodical inundations, varying according to the amount of rainfall in the country higher towards its source. This year, however, the floods seem to have been of more than ordinary magnitude, and the amount of misery and distress caused by the destruction of homes and property to have reached the most alarming proportions, and famine gaunt and spectral stalks abroad amongst its unhappy residents. The Mayor of New Orleans, owing to his inability to meet the calls for food made upon him by the wretched inhabitants, had telegraphed to New York for assistance in order to mitigate the horrors of famine with which the city has been afflicted. In his appeal he states that forty-five thousand persons daily are being partially relieved from the scanty fund at his disposal, and estimates that it will require at least one million dollars to minister to the temporary wants of the people, and diminish the horrors that prevail. In Asia Minor also, famine is prevailing to an alarming extent, and the last reports stated that there were at least one hundred deaths per day from sheer starvation. We who live in a land of plenty, where the word want is unknown, cannot realise the amount of suffering and misery which many who live in less favored countries than our own are forced at the present to undergo. From Canada, we learn that enormous damage and destruction to property occurred through a monster iceberg at Quebec, several large steamers and other vessels being totally destroyed, involving a loss of one million five hundred thousand pounds, but happily with no loss of life. On the Continent of Europe the sacrilegious work of spoliation and persecution still continues. In Italy, the Government, not content with the already long