

## AUCKLAND.

(From our own correspondent)

We are now in the thick of our Provincial Council elections. Nothing very noticeable, except that the present educational arrangements are admitted to be a dead failure, financially if not in other ways. The Mayor, one of the candidates, and a leading secularist, said "he supported the Education Act in the Provincial Council, but experience had proved during the past year that it was not in its present shape of a workable character." Could anything else be expected of a measure so arbitrary and unjust? Gross injustice never stands permanently, and is sure to be resisted—and resisted by strong measures, too—at times. The annual sum which it was intended to collect was £13,000; they could only squeeze £7000 out of the pockets of the people. They at first summoned many, who of course had to pay; but they have ceased to summon of late, either because they saw the case was hopeless, or because they were ashamed of the unjust work in which they were engaged. They could not for shame's sake bring a great population—perhaps a great majority—of the inhabitants of the Province into Court to extort an unjust tax from them. So much for secular education in Auckland up to the present. We shall see what we shall see next. No thanks to our so-called liberal Press if the present unjust system come to a speedy end, and be replaced by something more just and generous. They have done their best or worst to perpetrate the wrong.

## THE GOOD TEMPLARS.

THE Good Templars are becoming formidable here at present in more ways than one. The publicans are obviously afraid that they will injure their business. They have accordingly, some of them, resolved to fit up Good Templar apartments in their hotels. But the Good Templars are too old birds to be caught in that way. They smell a rat. They wish to fly from danger, not to court it. They are becoming political, and openly denounce all public men who won't go with them. The Press think this is proceeding too far, and somewhat tyrannical. But the fact is, every popular association has political power, and will use it to obtain its ends. You cannot prevent that if the members be only united. It is not probable that the "Templars" will long be politically powerful, simply because they have no strong and lasting bond to unite them. They embrace men of all religions; discord and divisions, therefore, will soon arise among them, and the Society will melt away. Religion is the only strong and lasting bond of unity, and the firmest ground of political strength and power—I mean the Catholic religion, of course.

I said there was only one noticeable event about our Provincial Council elections, but I was wrong; there is another. Mr Kirby, a Catholic, comes forward as an avowed and strong advocate of the Irish National system of pure secular education in Government schools. Though Mr Kirby be a respectable citizen and well meaning man, he has happily little or no weight or influence in the political world. He has made a false and rash step for some reason or other, as many other ambitious men before him have done—men of greater mark than Mr Kirby is, or is ever likely to be. He has given much scandal and annoyance to his own friends in his own community by the step he has taken, and is not likely to gain much respect from others outside his denomination by acting so inconsistent a part, let his motives be ever so pure.

The political power of the Good Templars, so far as they possess any, will of course be exerted against the Catholic Church. But there are various ways in which Good Templars may indirectly contribute to the benefit of the Church. First, Catholics from their position are much mixed with Protestants. When Protestants become sober men, their Catholic companions may become so too. That would be a great and direct gain to the Catholic Church. Moreover, the enthusiasm of the Templar may communicate itself to the Catholic, and induce him to join the Father Mathew Society, now organised and working under the patronage of Bishop Croke. That would be a still further gain to us. Again, whatever promotes real practical Christianity among Protestants, is a gain to the Catholic Church for this reason, that it prepares them to see the light of Catholic truth. Most of the modern converts to the Church are from the ranks of good Protestants, and the Good Templars may furnish some—who knows? Many Protestants who join the Catholic Church long practise Catholic observances, and strive to imbibe a Catholic spirit ere they leave the Protestant ranks openly.

When a Catholic has no reasonable chance of obtaining a seat in the Provincial Council or House of Representatives without flying in the face of his own Church, and insulting its authorities, a sense of decency and respect for himself should keep him from aspiring to such an honor. An educated Catholic like Mr Kirby cannot fail to know that the highest authority in the Church to which he professes to belong, the Pope himself, has condemned in the most public, formal, and emphatic manner the principle of excluding the Catholic religion and the authority of its ministers from schools in which Catholic children are to be educated. He must also know that the secular, or Irish National system of education is one of the greatest national grievances of which Ireland has now to complain,—so far as concerns the Catholic people,—and that they are making strenuous efforts to obtain justice in that, as in other matters at the present moment, by Home Rule or some other means.

## OUR COMMON SCHOOLS AND THE LIQUOR TRADE.

WITH reference to these Auckland schools, a very severe remark was made by the Resident Magistrate, Captain Beckham, the other day, on the occasion of a poor Catholic child of 11 years of age being brought before him drunk. He said that the Provincial Government by their school system had begun at the wrong end in their attempts to educate the people. They were raising public money to be expended on educating the children of those who could very well afford to support their own schools; while the poorest class—the gutter children, such as the unfortunate child before him—were permitted to grow up uneducated. He added that a case like this was a disgrace not merely to

any one individual particularly, but to the entire community, the town of Auckland. He was right. As a Catholic I feel that not the least portion of that disgrace attaches to us of the Catholic community. The mother of this unhappy child is a drunkard, and the boon companion of men as dissipated, and shameless as herself. The town is overrun with public houses, and Mr Beckham himself may well feel some strong qualms of conscience to think that he, as a licensing Justice, is responsible for this state of things in no slight degree. But for the multitude of the grog-shops the community of this town would not be scandalized by the appearance of so many drunken men and women—not a few of them Catholics—as we now see brought before him every day of the week. The Catholic Bishop, clergy, and schoolmasters are laboring with unwearied pains to promote religion and morality among the Catholic people, old and young, in this place; but their efforts are being in a great measure rendered futile by the power of the liquor trader. He reigns supreme over all classes. The power which he possesses now far exceeds that which he possessed in Father Mathew's time, and it is growing in strength every year, as the increase of the excise revenue and many other circumstances incontrovertibly prove. Where are we to look for a remedy? In popular Temperance societies by whatever name they may be called I fear we can place but small confidence, and still less in any legislative remedy against intemperance; any good they do now can be but partial and temporary; for this reason that to a great extent so many of both Catholic and Protestant people have lost their conscience, and are possessed with a spirit of religious indifference totally incompatible with any high moral tone. If a remedy is to be found at all it must be found in the power of religion; and if religion anywhere be powerful, it ought to be in the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church possesses in itself a moral power great beyond all calculation when Church and people work in concert. Did we not see this in the case of Father Mathew? It was not merely as a patriot, philanthropist, and enthusiast, but as a priest of the Catholic Church that he succeeded as he did in putting down the power of drink, in a manner that appeared superhuman or miraculous. But Father Mathew had a "tail," a following worthy of himself and his great cause; and who were they? For the most part, poor Irish Catholics. What a spiritless and degenerate race of Irish Catholic laity have we in this province at this moment, compared with their generous and noble-hearted fathers and grandfathers who strengthened the hands of Father Mathew in his terrible war against King Drink. But they are not all degenerate; there is a remnant left, and it may yet increase, small though it be. We have seen of late among Auckland Catholics some of the first signs of a revival of the heroic spirit which animated Father Mathew and his disciples in days gone by.

If the Catholic people of Auckland would only muster strong in this cause they would not long want a leader well qualified to head them. But what can a leader do without sufficient followers? A Father Mathew society is already established in Auckland, and in working order. But it is working like the Church of which it is a sort of emblem against fearful odds; and if it were supported as it ought to be, the means of strengthening the hands of our clergy, and wiping off that foul blot which drink is daily rendering more damaging to the character of the Catholic laity in this town and province. That we are not worse than our Protestant neighbours is a small consolation to us. We ought to be much better than any of them, and would be so too if we were even moderately true to our religion. The Catholic Church is the legitimate source of "all power," not only in the religious, but in the moral and civil or political order of society; that is when Catholics act an honest part, and are loyal to their principles, but not otherwise. We often rail at our enemies of other creeds, but some of our worst enemies are to be found among our own community.—Correspondent.

## RECOLLECTIONS OF ROME.

NO. III.

THOUGH I started by telling of catacombs and funerals, I do not intend that all my reminiscences shall be so gloomy. In this number I shall try to describe the Carnival. For three long days Rome forgets the gravity which years and sorrows have brought her, and sets herself to play and frolic with all the lightheartedness of an infant city like Dunedin. This half a week she gives to enjoyment from morning till night. Gay garments and smiling faces are the order of the day, and woe to the dallard who by sombre garb or sullen brow refuses to pay homage to King Carnival. His punishment is speedy, his sentence, to be smothered in flowers or crushed in bonbons. This annual holiday is enjoyed by the Romans with a keenness which it is impossible to witness without, in a certain degree, sharing in it. Girls in Rome are brought up with a strictness of which their sisters in Australia have not an idea, never going out alone even to Mass, and rarely being taken to any place of amusement. The Carnival is almost their only distraction, and young ladies who enjoy balls, races, operas, &c. all the year round, and yet sigh for amusement, can readily imagine that if all their outings were to be condensed into three days, that half week would be a fever of delight long looked forward to, and ardently wished for.

From one end to the other of the Corso, mirth and mischief hold undisputed sway. Windows and balconies are packed with eager combatants who wage a mimic war with the merry crowd below. Revellers from all parts of the world join in the fun, and rival and improve on the antics of the Romans. The armour for this warfare consists of a fantastic dress of some bright-colored calico, blue, pink, mauve, or what you will, and a guard of fine wire-work for the face. The ammunition is great sacks of confetti made of lime instead of sugar, and pyramids of flowers. These are for the unknown enemy, but there are French sweetmeats and exquisite bouquets to throw to one's friends.

There are two ways of seeing the Carnival, both of which I tried. The safer but less enjoyable method is to have seats in a balcony. From this elevated position one sees all the sport without much risk of being attacked, except from the opposite windows. The carriages pass below in two rows, one line going up the street, the other returning, and are all filled with imps, clowns, demons, sailors, and every grotesque costume that it is possible to imagine. As well as with