

P R E T E N C E !



SOME years, a good many years, ago, we heard a leading politician say in the Otago Provincial Council, when twitted about the obstacles thrown by him and his party in the way of the rapid settlement of the land, that they wanted the land for their own children. These words sank deep into our memory, and suggested to us the propriety of paying particular attention to the policy of various Governments ever since in reference to settlement. The result of our observations is, as we have from time to time said in this paper, that so far as we could see, no Government has been really in earnest on this question, and that all Governments have taken elaborate pains to devise means how not to do it. And this is the reason that so little settlement, comparatively, has taken place. Last week we had an illustration of this how-not-to-do-it policy, and a strong case in point. Nineteen sections were put up for sale in the Land Office, Dunedin, and for these nineteen sections there were 260 applicants. And this striking illustration of the how-not-to-do-it policy comes immediately after the many speeches of members of Government, and their supporters maintaining that Government deserved the greatest credit for the zeal and success with which settlement was being carried on by the present Government. Certainly there is not much zeal and success in providing nineteen sections for 260 applicants desirous of settling on the land. No doubt it will be said, as it has often been said before, that many applicants are not *bona fide* and are only applicants in order to serve a friend. We readily admit there is some truth in this; but at the same time, all due allowance being made, there can be no doubt that large numbers of *bona fide* applicants are unable to obtain land to settle upon, and that the blame of this rests entirely with the administration. Government, we maintain, is not in earnest. Government, no matter what its professions, does not wish settlement of the land to proceed rapidly. The sheep interest and the large holdings interest are too strong in their influence with our rulers and legislators, and too much opposed to small farms on any large scale. The fact that settlement has in the past proceeded so slowly, and that men desirous of settling on the land cannot get land to settle on, prove this to demonstration. It is in vain for Ministers to protest their earnestness, and for their supporters to laud their exertions. Nothing can remove the impression or weaken the conviction produced by the fact that 260 applicants, going into the Land Court of Otago in one week, find provided for them just nineteen sections. The public will remain thoroughly convinced that neither the Government nor their party really wish for such settlement of the land as the exigencies of individuals and the first and best interests of the country demand.

THE SPECTATOR AND NEW ZEALAND CATHOLICS.

AFTER reading an article in this periodical headed "Colonial Loyalty and the Vatican," we came to the conclusion that even a high-toned English periodical can write a good deal of nonsense and display a large amount of ignorance even on matters of fact. In fact, this article has largely tended to weaken our faith in the ability and learning of English public writers. The writer of the article referred to assumes that the Catholics of Australia and New Zealand are separatists and not loyal to the British throne. We have resided a great many years in the colonies, and possess a pretty extensive acquaintance with Catholics, and are enabled to say from our own experience that there is no truth whatever in this assumption. Why, the question of separation of the colonies from Great Britain has never been even considered by Catholics. The question, so far as they are concerned, is not within the pale of practical politics, and we are decidedly of opinion that none would be more strongly opposed to such separation than colonial Catholics—none more loyal to Great Britain. This is a bogey to frighten babies with; all full-grown men here laugh at such an idea as separation, and most certainly the supporters of such a measure, if such exist, are not to be found in the Catholic body. The writer of this article seriously tells us that Irishmen are in alarming numbers in the episcopate of Australia and New Zealand, and that consequently it is necessary to

call in the aid of the Vatican to prevent the appointment of any more Irish Bishops, and thus save the integrity of the British Empire. What folly and absurdity! It is very unlikely the Holy See would interfere in a purely political question, and it is also extremely unlikely that colonial Catholics would change their political views at the bidding of Government nominees. But alarmed as the *Spectator* is, he understates the facts of the case. Instead of there being only two Archbishops and six Bishops Irishmen in Australia and New Zealand, the fact is, of the Australasian clergy five Archbishops and fourteen Bishops are Irishmen, so that the danger, if danger there be, is very much greater than the *Spectator* is aware of. Now, after this correction, we anticipate the alarm of our contemporary will partake of the nature of a panic; and that the Duke of Norfolk will be despatched in all haste to implore of the Vatican to interpose and, by at least deposing some of these terrible Irishmen, save the connection between England and her colonies! The *Spectator* seriously informs the public that "the appointment of the present Metropolitan of New Zealand was strongly resisted on the ground that he was an Englishman and opposed to the Irish separatists." Nothing of the sort. The facts of the case are diametrically the opposite. So much for the value of the *Spectator's* views. But one thing is certain, that whilst Englishmen are furiously opposed to Irish ecclesiastics interfering in politics, they are most anxious that the chief ecclesiastic in the world, though an Italian, should efficaciously interfere in politics in favour of England and against Irishmen everywhere. It is for this purpose such efforts are now being made to enter into diplomatic relations with the Vatican. It is not for love of the Church or of the Irish race; it is not for the sake of religion, but purely in order that the Pope should become a politician in their favour and against Irishmen, that Englishmen, particularly English Catholics, are exerting themselves to persuade the Pope to take an active part in politics and to appoint political Bishops to strengthen English interests and English tyranny. For one thing, therefore, we are indebted to this writer in the *Spectator*. He blunts out the object of English diplomacy and lays bare the project of English politicians, which is to make the Pope, if possible, a tool in the hands of the English Government to prevent the appointment of Irishmen as Bishops in the colonies. And so great is their haste and zeal in this anti-Irish crusade that they appear incapable of perceiving that they are offering the most brutal insult to our Holy Father, and doing the very thing best calculated to create what certainly does not now exist—a desire on the part of Irishmen for the separation of the colonies from Great Britain. But this is not the first time that the conceit and hatred of certain Englishmen have produced the very thing which they deprecated.

THE HUNT.

THE anonymous hounds are still in pursuit of their prey—Bishop MORAN. His speech at the distribution of prizes to the pupils of the Christian Brothers' schools, Dunedin, has had the effect of whetting their appetites. In fact, their hunger is so keen that they are ready to tear him to pieces, and though cowardice is the characteristic of these anonymous hounds, hunger, which the proverb says can break through a stone wall, has endowed them this time with a species of courage. Even their indignation is roused at the supposed indignity put upon the intellectual prowess of New Zealand by this terrible fox, the object of their pursuit. They have made one great and shrill cry over one sentence which they quote from the *Times'* report of the Bishop's speech, but which, unfortunately for them, does not represent what he really said. But they are welcome to any triumph they may fancy they have gained by this misrepresentation. The man from Palmerston, who does not and never did exist in Palmerston, indignantly enquires who Bishop MORAN is. Well, we thought this was an entirely superfluous question in Dunedin. However, as the non-Palmerstonian seems to think the question a mighty hit, and as it appears to relieve his overwrought feelings, we have no objection to repeat it for him, and ask who is Bishop MORAN, in order that some equally indignant Colonist from Palmerston or some other locality rejoicing in some equally real existence may answer it. Another of the dogs, whose yelp resembles the shrill reed, tosses up his head and in falsetto whines out: "The idea of owing the Catholics half a million, why, all unmarried men and