

PRELIMINARY NOTICE.

CATHOLIC CHURCH, PORT CHALMERS.

A GRAND CONCERT, Vocal and Instrumental, in aid of the Building Fund of the above Church, will be given in Crickmore's Royal Assembly Rooms, Port Chalmers, on

WEDNESDAY, 23RD SEPTEMBER.

The Members of St. Joseph's Church Choir have kindly volunteered their services.

MOONLIGHT EXCURSION.

For the convenience of visitors from Dunedin, the steamer Golden Age will leave the Old Jetty at seven o'clock, returning immediately after the concert.

Return Tickets, including admission to Concert, 3s 6d each.

A Brass Band will accompany the steamer.

AGENTS FOR THE TABLET.

THE TABLET will be sent to any part of New Zealand by forwarding a Post Office order for 6s 6d to the Office, Stafford street, Dunedin; it can also be obtained from the following persons who are duly authorised agents in their respective districts:—

Alexandra ... ..	Mr Kilmich	Kihikihi ... ..	Mr Farrel
Arrowtown ... ..	„ Fritchard	Lawrence ... ..	„ Jeffrey
Auckland ... ..	„ Hamil	Lyttelton ... ..	Rev. Mr Francis
Blacks ... ..	Harrington & Gavin	Nelson ... ..	„ Mr James
Charleston ... ..	„ Mr McPhurland	No Town ... ..	„ Deviney
Christchurch ... ..	„ Bonnington & Co.	Naseby ... ..	„ Busch
Coromandel ... ..	„ Mr Silk	Napier ... ..	„ J. A. Reardon
Dunedin ... ..	„ Wheeler	Onehunga ... ..	„ Honan
„ ... ..	„ Macedo	Otahuhu ... ..	„ Goodwin
„ ... ..	„ Braithwaite	Oamaru ... ..	„ Toohy
„ ... ..	„ Baird	Palmerston ... ..	„ Lewis
„ ... ..	„ Mitchell	Port Chalmers ... ..	„ Dale
„ ... ..	„ Somers	Queenstown ... ..	„ Boyne
Grey mouth ... ..	„ Carter	Ross ... ..	„ Mulhern
Grahamstown ... ..	„ Overar & Co.	St. Bathans ... ..	„ T. Milvey
Hokitika ... ..	„ Lynch	Timaru ... ..	„ O'Driscoll
Hawera ... ..	„ Mr Rogers	Wellington ... ..	„ Hurley
Invercargill ... ..	„ J. McInerney	Wanganui ... ..	„ Willis
Melbourne ... ..	„ B. King	Waikouaita ... ..	„ Brownie

NOTICE TO OUR AGENTS.

IT is respectfully requested that Agents for the TABLET would advise the Secretary when any change—either of increase or decrease—occurs in the number to be forwarded. Those agents who may be receiving copies in excess of the demand, will kindly notify same.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS AND ADVERTISERS.

Mr WHEELER, Stafford street, and Mr MACEDO, Prince's street south, are empowered to receive monies and orders for papers on account of the NEW ZEALAND TABLET.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THE communications of J. A. R., Napier, and W. J. N., Auckland, arrived too late for insertion, but will be attended to next week.

New Zealand Tablet.

FIAT JUSTITIA.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1874

HONESTY AND TRUTH IN POLITICS.

THERE ought to be both honesty and truth in politics, as in other things. This is a proposition that all will concede. But in point of fact, do they exist? The debate in the House of Representatives on the Premier's resolutions in reference to the Provinces of the North Island, and certain reports recently spread abroad, have suggested this proposition and this question to us.

The impression created by that debate was that in the event of the Resolutions being carried, the Parliament would be dissolved, and an appeal made to the electors before legislation on the subject should be initiated. There cannot, we think, be a doubt entertained that a promise to this effect was made by the Premier. Is it the intention of the Government to act in obedience to this promise? Of course we are not in a position to answer this question satisfactorily. But a considerable amount of uneasiness has been created by the feelers thrown out on this point by certain people who are known to be more than merely friendly to the Government of the Hon. JULIUS VOGEL.

These gentlemen say that there is now no intention to dissolve Parliament, and that they are glad it is so, inasmuch as, on the one hand, it is not desirable to put the country to the trouble and expense of a general election at the present time; whereas, on the other, the present House of Representatives is quite competent to deal with

the question and settle it finally. We have no desire to underrate the abilities, or undervalue the integrity of our present representatives; but this is not the question.

The point to be considered is, did the Ministry make the promise, and is it their intention to keep it. To us it is perfectly clear that the Hon Premier distinctly promised that should his Resolutions be carried, the Parliament would be dissolved, and that no legislation should be attempted in reference to them till a general election had taken place. It may be that such is still the intention of the Government, but we must confess to an uncomfortable feeling on the subject. Perhaps, indeed, the Premier has reason to exclaim, "Save me from my friends!" and that his reputation as an honest politician and a truthful man is now endangered through the indiscreet zeal of foolish followers. It is to be hoped it is so.

For nothing could be more damaging to a public man, or more injurious to good government than a deliberate breaking of a promise made by our First Minister when solemnly introducing resolutions to effect important organic and constitutional changes. The Minister must be supposed to have weighed the matter well, and to have felt it his duty, when proposing his reforms for the first time, to consult the country by means of a general election before finally disposing of the question. Such being the case, what must inevitably be the result of a total change of policy? Why of course a loss of faith in the word of politicians, and of all confidence in our rulers. If men can permit themselves thus to trifle with their convictions and play fast and loose with their promises, and if the public are so dead to honor and their own interests as to tolerate such conduct, good government must speedily come to an end. In such an event, nothing but corruption in both rulers and governed can be reasonably expected.

It is idle to say the promise was a mistake, and that it is now plain that it would be unwise to hold a general election. Such an excuse is folly. There could be no mistake, unless indeed the Premier, as some of his opponents affirmed, suddenly and without due deliberation determined to destroy the North Island Provinces in retaliation for the rejection of the pet features of his Forest Bill. But let the matter be considered under every point of view, there is no escape. If the promise of a dissolution of Parliament be not kept, there appears to be bad faith and a trick. And as to putting the country to trouble and expense, these will have to be undergone in a short time. There is no reason whatever—not the slightest—why a general election should be more troublesome this year than next.

But should not the Parliament be dissolved before the next session, it will be said, and with good reason too, that the Premier, surprised and very much pleased at the unexpectedly large majority which carried his resolutions, took advantage of the stupor or apathy of the country to legislate on a subject which had not been duly considered by colonists, simply because he happened to have a pliant House of Representatives for the moment.

We write this, not in any spirit of antagonism to the policy of doing away with Provincial institutions as at present existing. On the contrary, it has always appeared to us as a species of absurdity to have, in a sparsely peopled Colony in these days, ten Governments and ten Legislatures. But this is infinitely a lesser evil than the absence of honor and truthfulness in our highest officials. Besides, the people should know at least some of the chief details of the new system which is to be inaugurated; and until information is given, no one can have the least security that something may not be done which will be detrimental to his interests. For example, it is possible that the Crown lands of Otago might be sold for the purpose of making roads and harbors at the North Cape. We have been told, to be sure, that there will be local government, and that localities will receive endowments; but what is to be the nature of the local governments? what are the endowments to consist of? These are all-important questions. We have ourselves a conviction that the new system will turn out to be neither more nor less than the absorption of almost all the land revenue of the Colony for the purpose of paying the interest of the money borrowed for public works and immigration. We do not pronounce an opinion as to the justice and policy of such a scheme, but we are convinced the people in the Provinces of Otago and Canterbury are not prepared to sanction such an arrangement.