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NOTICE.

THE Directors of the N. Z. TABLET Company being desirous of ascertaining how many of the Shareholders in the Company are still in New Zealand, respectfully request all persons holding shares to forward their names as early as convenient to the Secretary, *Tablet* office, Dunedin.

NOTICE.

WE desire again to draw the attention of our readers to the opportunity afforded them of obtaining a large and finely executed photographic portrait of the Rev. Father Hennebery. The picture is an unusually fine one, and even independent of any associations connected with it, is a handsome ornament. It is to be disposed of for the purpose of assisting to clear off the debt due on the Dominican Convent, Dunedin, and which is still considerable. The Art Union drawing has been postponed to August, as it has been found impossible to hold it any earlier. Tickets, price 2s 6d, may be had on application to the Lady Superior, Convent, Dowling-street; or to the Secretary, *TABLET* Office, Dunedin.

The New Zealand Tablet.

FIAT JUSTITIA.

FRIDAY, JUNE 14, 1878.

A FEW INSTRUCTIVE FACTS.



WHEN the new Education Act was proposed, and whilst it was under discussion previous to its enactment, the Rev. Dr. STUART, of Dunedin, a leading Presbyterian clergyman, telegraphed to Wellington to the Minister having charge of the Bill, "God speed." The doctor's enthusiasm could not brook the delay of the post-office; his zeal in the cause of secular education could only be satisfied by obtaining a vent through the telegraph wires. "God speed" the godless system was the telegraphed prayer of this Christian minister expedited in order

to encourage the Minister to persevere in his godless scheme.

Nor did the doctor's zeal stop here. A meeting of Protestant clergymen of all denominations was held shortly after, in Knox Church—the doctor's own church—and over which, if we remember rightly, the doctor himself presided, and at which a resolution, in favour of secular education as opposed to denominational, was carried with the approbation, and after the warm advocacy of Dr. STUART himself. We think, though we are not absolutely certain, that the Rev. Dr. COPLAND, another Dunedin Presbyterian clergyman, strongly supported Dr. STUART's views.

There can be no doubt, however, that the Rev. Mr. FITCHETT, Wesleyan clergyman, went in head and shoulders and hips for secular education. He repudiated denominational education almost indignantly. On principle, not at all as a matter of expediency, he and the Baptist clergyman advocated secular education as a right and proper system to be established in a Christian community.

At length the godless Bill so strenuously supported by these Christian ministers became law, helped by their advocacy the principle of secularism triumphed, and now, a colony made up for the most part of Christians, possesses an unchristian system of education. This system has been duly inaugurated; the machinery for its administration provided, and it is now in full working order.

In many parts of the Province of Otago—we are not yet in a position to speak of other provinces—clergymen of various Protestant denominations have applied for permission to give religious instruction out of school hours in Government schools. In Dunedin, the Rev. Mr. FITCHETT obtained permission to do so in the Stafford-street school house, even though at the time selected by him his own Wesleyan Church and Schoolroom are shut up. At Lawrence, too, the Wesleyan clergyman has been granted the use of the Government school-rooms for the accommodation of a Mutual Improvement Young Men's Society. But the public is told by way of apology that there is nothing sectarian in the teaching of these Wesleyan clergymen in these schools. *Credat judex non ego.* Only fancy the religious teaching of Wesleyans not sectarian.

But the Revs. Dr. STUART and COPLAND have not been so fortunate, as their Wesleyan brethren, in their application to the Dunedin School Committee. This committee has refused those gentlemen permission to give religious instruction in Government school rooms on Saturdays, or indeed at any time. Whereupon these gentlemen are highly indignant, and threaten to commence an agitation in favour of denominational education. Denominationalists are avenged thereby, and these rev. gentlemen cut a rather ridiculous figure before the public.

But it may be asked how comes it that the Rev. Mr. FITCHETT succeeded in obtaining what has been refused to the Presbyterian rev. doctors; and the committee will find it rather difficult to give a satisfactory answer to this question. One answer is that given by one of the School Committee at its last meeting, viz:—The Rev. Mr. FITCHETT teaches nothing sectarian. This, however, is so absurd that it is undeserving of serious consideration and may be dismissed at once. The other is that Mr. FITCHETT has some control over the school building in which he gives religious instruction. Has the School Committee borrowed this building, or hired it from the clergyman or his friends, which? We must refuse to believe in the borrowing theory, and look upon it as certain it has been hired. If hired, then it is, for the time being, a Government school building, and should, in reason and consistency, be dealt with as all the other school buildings, so far as permitting religious instruction is concerned. Under whatever point of view, then, the conduct of the Dunedin School Committee is considered it is indefensible. If they acted rightly in refusing the permission sought by Drs. STUART and COPLAND, they acted improperly in permitting Mr. FITCHETT to give religious instruction in the Stafford-street school, and *vice versa*. It is impossible to wriggle out of this dilemma.

There are a few more facts in relation to this matter which must not be omitted here. In Dunedin City—that is, within the municipal boundaries—there are five large Presbyterian Churches, to some of which there are attached school-rooms, and to all of which belong large rooms, which are very well suited for catechetical instructions. There is no resident citizen of Dunedin who could not reach one or other of these churches from his own home in a walk of from five to seven minutes. These churches then are easily within the reach of every citizen of Dunedin, and quite as near to their homes as the Government schools, all things considered.