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(To be continued.)

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The New Zealand Tablet.

FIAT JUSTITIA.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 3, 1888.

PROGRESS AND JUSTICE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

The Catholics of New Zealand provide, at their own sole expense, an excellent education for their own children. Yet such is the sense of justice and policy in the New Zealand Legislature that it compels these Catholics, after having manfully provided for their own children, to contribute largely towards the free and godless education of other people's children!!! This is tyranny, oppression, and plunder.

THE OTAGO CENTRAL.



R. PYKE'S Bill *re* Otago Central Railway has been defeated, and this means that the Otago Central is not to be made for a very long time, if ever. This is the sum and substance of the Premier's proposals, and for this the people of Otago are to thank several of their own representatives. But it will be said: how can

this be said, in the face of the pledge of the Premier that th's line shall be pushed on to Middlemarch with all possible speed, and that next session, if he should consider it necessary, after himself inspecting the country, to continue the line in the interests of settlement, he will bring in a Bill to authorise a company to continue it to Clyde? With all due reverence for the Premier, this is transparent humbug. The conduct of all Governments for the last ten years in reference to this line gives reason for the conviction that Government will have no difficulty in finding reasons for slow instead of rapid progress. The resolution of the Premier to visit the country himself is ominous. The public can not forget the report of the Commission some years ago to the effect that the country through which it was proposed to run the Otago Central was little better than a howling wilderness. Commissions have a knack of only seeing what they want to see, and Ministers are

usually not much better. The public of Otago have learned to distrust both Commissions and Ministers, from Sir H. ATKINSON to Sir R. STOUT, on the Otago Central. For ten years all Ministers have laboured hard not to push on this railway, but to find out excuses for not doing so. This is plain to the most cursory observer, and we are convinced that as it has been in the past so it will be in the future. The great cry now is: By all means let the line be made, but by the Government, and not by a private company on the land grant principle. The cry is little short of scandalous, and is really only the merest pretext. Anyone who considers the subject carefully must come to this conclusion. Why, Sir H. ATKINSON proposes to bring in a Bill next year to authorise a private company to make the line to Clyde, and pledges himself to give 33 per cent. in land, or 50 per cent. in plant, to said company. Is not this the very principle of Mr. PYKE'S Bill? And yet the men who stonewalled Mr. PYKE'S Bill declare themselves ready to accept the Premier's offer. They must consider the people of Otago the merest dolts if they fancy these people so dull as not to be able to see through the subterfuge. The Premier's offer is an astute project, whose chief aim is to kill the Otago Central, or, at all events, to postpone its completion even to Clyde for probably half a century. If Sir H. ATKINSON is in earnest, he has nothing to do but take up Mr. PYKE'S Bill and amend it so as to secure mining interests and the settlement of the land, if he thinks the Bill does not contain sufficient provisions in these respects. But it will be said: Do you doubt the word of the Premier, or do you think he will fail to redeem his pledge next session? Our answer is: the Premier will not have the money to go on to Middlemarch. The loan is not to be touched, and ordinary revenue is falling. Notwithstanding twenty-five per cent. of an increase in Customs Duties, last month's Customs returns are less than they were the corresponding month of last year, and so we are convinced it will be to the end of the year. Under these circumstances it will be very easy for the Premier to say we could not go on to Middlemarch, owing to the depressed state of the Colonial finances. But then, it will be asked, what about the promised Bill to enable a private company to complete the line to Clyde? Well, we say the reasons that are found valid for rejecting Mr. PYKE'S Bill this year will be equally valid for the rejection of a perfectly similar Bill next year. On the whole, therefore, we are persuaded that the people of Otago may throw their caps at the Otago Central, that in reference to it they are befooled, and that the chief of those perpetrating this foolery are to be found amongst their own representatives. All this affords another argument of the folly of those who laboured so hard years ago to destroy local self-government, and centralise everything in one remote town.

VAIN are the self-congratulations of those who assert it as proved that Ireland is not coerced because of her Catholic faith. What otherwise is it that has moved the Irish Methodists to memorialise the Wesleyan Conference against Home Rule. Is it not that they oppose the admission of Catholics to equality with them? What again, has induced Mr. Chamberlain speaking a day or two ago at Birmingham to bring forward once more the old argument of the civil war to be caused by the rising of Ulster. These are anti-Catholic movements and anti-Catholic movements only, and they give the lie direct to those interested Protestants and anti-Catholic Catholics who declare that the Catholicism of the country has nothing to do with th^e matter. That Mr. Chamberlain's argument shows a weakness and a want of any valid plea is nothing to the purpose. Beyond a few Orange riots, of complete insignificance if they did occur of which there is some doubt, there would be no rising of Ulster. But the readiness to make use of the anti-Catholic argument proves the point.

It is to be feared that the patience of the Irish people is beginning at last to fail, and that coercion, which has in everything else proved a failure, has succeeded at length in driving them, or some of them, to desperation. A fierce resistance to eviction is reported from the Wray estate at Rathkeale, in Limerick, and two boycotted men have been murdered—one at Listowel, and another at Kanturk,—the crimes being committed in the broad daylight by masked men, who immediately escaped. Can it be that the fate of these unhappy victims was accelerated by any fear lest the boycott was about to be relaxed? It has been looked upon, we know, as a preventive against the commission of murder. In any case, it is conclusively proved that, if it were the disposition of the people to commit crime, coercion has no terrors to restrain them. Murder that stalks abroad at mid-day is not an apparition seen in well-governed countries.