

## DEATH.

DILLON.—On the 14th August, at Hokonui Bush, Southland, while falling a tree, Patrick Dillon—late of Queen's County, Ireland—aged 39 years.

# New Zealand Tablet.

FIAT JUSTITIA.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1874

## THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

PERHAPS this article should be headed Sir JAMES FERGUSON'S speech. It is not to His Excellency's official speech, delivered at the closing of our Parliament, that we draw attention; but to the address he delivered at the farewell banquet given to him by the members of the two Legislative Chambers. His Excellency spoke on this occasion fluently and pleasingly, and gave evidence that he can wield the English language well. In addition to this it must have been highly gratifying to his audience to hear one in his position speak in such eulogistic terms of the great resources of the colony, and of the measures adopted to develop these resources. Sir JAMES FERGUSON'S words will do New Zealand much good, and for this we must all feel deeply indebted to His Excellency.

But there was one subject on which Sir James dwelt at considerable length, and yet succeeded in saying very little, if indeed anything, that was new and suggestive. He said almost nothing, indeed, calculated to help colonists to overcome the difficulties of the question. Our readers will at once understand us as alluding to the views expressed by him on the very important and very vexed question of Education. At this time it is quite unnecessary to inculcate the importance of Education, or to prove its utility or necessity for the promotion of the public welfare. These are points which are conceded on all sides—in fact they have come to be regarded as mere truisms.

Nevertheless, all the real difficulties of the question, so far at least as the general public is concerned, remain without solution. True, we have that sort of Education which under the circumstances commends itself to the majority, but at the same time it is a sort of education of which nobody entirely approves. It is the result of a compromise on the part of the various sections of the majority—a compromise concerning the wisdom of which these sections are themselves ill at ease. Education is a great necessity and a great blessing—everybody says so. All ought to be educated—there is no second opinion on the subject. It is the duty of the Government to adopt means for placing, as far as possible, good schools within the reach of every child between the ages of five and fourteen throughout the colony. We do not suppose there is an individual in the community outside the Lunatic Asylum, who would controvert this proposition.

And yet the realisation of these truths, so far as this colony is concerned, appears to be a long way off. If Sir JAMES FERGUSON, instead of impressing on us truths about which nobody entertains any doubt, had pointed out to us the genuine meaning of the word education, and indicated the way by which all our children could be educated, he would have placed us under great additional obligations. Sir JAMES can hardly have failed to see that even the best system prevailing here is inefficient, and works a grievous injustice to minorities. In Otago, Canterbury and Auckland, the three largest provinces, the entire community is taxed to provide an unsatisfactory system of Education for the majority. The minority is obliged to pay the piper, whilst the majority dance a discordant jig. The system adopted in these provinces is godless, and expensive to the country. In principle it is the worst that can be imagined, and in practice, judging from the experience of other countries, it cannot but lead to the most deplorable results—infidelity, disloyalty, and immorality. It is indeed greatly to be regretted that a statesman of such high abilities and extensive experience did not on the occasion of a great opportunity, throw aside all timidity and polite reticence, and tell the colony what it ought to do in order to raise up an intelligent, cultured, and moral population.

It is true, indeed, that His Excellency suggested the payment by results system, but this might mean a great deal or it might mean nothing. Had he been a little more explicit, he would have been more satisfactory. Payment of school-teaching by results is recommended; but how is

this to be carried out? Are schools of all denominations to receive aid in proportion to their efficiency? or are Government Schools alone to be considered? Unfortunately Sir JAMES has left us in the dark on this vital question. It is plainly unjust that all should be taxed for the exclusive benefit of a part. But this is the system that prevails generally at present, and which the Premier, the Hon. JULIUS VOGEL twice proposed to establish universally. Under such a system the education of the people, is an impossibility. How can a people be educated when the instruction offered is an insult to the most cherished feelings and principles of a large section of the community, is deprived of that which is of the very essence of Education—moral training founded on Faith—and is a standing monument of the tyranny of a majority, alienating nearly one-half of the people, and calculated to fill them with hatred and thoughts of revenge. An Institution that impresses on large masses of a nation a rankling sense of injustice and helplessness inflicted on them by their fellow citizens, is surely not a means likely to promote their intellectual and moral development.

It is not improbable, we take leave to say, that Sir JAMES FERGUSON is himself an advocate of Denominational Education. He belongs to that great Conservative party, one of whose fundamental principles is Education founded on and united with religion. His cautious treatment of the Education question, and his recommendation of payment by results, confirm us in this opinion. Under these circumstances, we regret very much that he permitted any delicacy arising from the presence at the banquet of so many advocates of Secular Education to withhold him from expressing fully his views on the subject. Had he spoken more freely and fully he might, indeed we are of opinion he would, have done good service to the cause of real education, and have largely contributed to the peace and prosperity of New Zealand.

## PAYMENT OF MEMBERS.

WHILE freely admitting the justice and strength of the arguments which have been adduced in favor of our legislators receiving something more tangible than bare honor, we imagine there are few outside of the senators themselves—to whom the system adopted by our law-makers, of annually sitting in judgment on the assessment of their own claims on the country, does not appear objectionable. Human nature is human nature, and unfortunately members of Parliament, privileged though they be in many respects, are not exempt from the weaknesses of ordinary mortals. There are few persons, indeed, who value their own worth and ability at the modest figure at which probably their fellows estimate the commodities; and it is scarcely fair to members themselves—as it decidedly is not to the country—to ask them to appraise their own value, and set a price upon their services. We do not imagine that by the annual outlay of the public money a pure and unadulterated class of legislators can be found, any more than we imagine it to be impossible that a man may faithfully serve his country without any pecuniary recompense whatever; but we do assert that in a young and growing country such as this, the non-payment of members has a tendency to exclude from Parliamentary life many honest and able men, whose worldly position will not admit of pecuniary sacrifice. There are, of course, many men upon whom fortune has so smiled that pecuniary recompense would be a matter of utter indifference, whose services—ever at the command of the public—would be far from a gain, even on those most desirable terms; and others still, in whose cases the amount of the honorarium would be more advantageously expended in securing the absence than in retaining the services of the recipients. To men who are at all burdened with a sense of delicacy, the debate which crops up each Session when the loaves and fishes are being divided, must be a most trying one. Modesty is not a virtue which a political career is calculated to foster, and the chances are that hon. members in estimating their calibre, and ticketing their services to the country, are apt to overvalue their time and abilities, and recoup themselves accordingly. The inadvisability of a continuance of the very unsatisfactory system of remuneration at present in operation, must have made itself apparent to everyone. Were a specific amount allowed those members whose means are such as to require a reimbursement for their services, much of the unseemly exhibitions which have charac-