

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:—

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Auckland ...	„ Hamill	Lyttelton ...	Rev. Mr Francis
Blacks ...	Harrington & Gavin	Nelson ...	Mr James
Charleston ...	Mr McPharland	No Town ...	„ Deviney
Christchurch ...	Bounington & Co.	Naseby ...	„ Busch
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Dunedin ...	„ Wheeler	Onehunga ...	„ Honan
„ ...	„ Macedo	Otahuhu ...	„ Goodwin
„ ...	„ Braithwaite	Oamaru ...	„ Toohy
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Hokitika ...	„ Lynch	Wellington ...	„ Hurley
Hawera ...	„ Mr Rogers	Wanganui ...	„ Willis
Invercargill ...	„ J. McInerney	Waikouaita ...	„ Browne
Melbourne ...	„ B. King		

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, Princes street south, are empowered to receive monies and orders for papers on account of the NEW ZEALAND TABLET.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Declined with Thanks—"The Conquering Craft," and "St. Francis Xavier."

New Zealand Tablet.

FIAT JUSTITIA.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1874.

THE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION IN OTAGO.

It is not long since a pretty generally received opinion in this Province, prevailed also throughout the entire Colony, to the effect that the Government system of Education here was almost perfect. A gentleman who is now a Cabinet Minister asserted, in his place in the House of Representatives, that the Otago system of Education was almost perfect; that, in fact, the only thing wanting to its perfection was a little more inspection. This statement was received with approbation,—at all events, no one questioned it, and under the circumstances it may be concluded that the House endorsed the hon. member's opinion.

It is no easy matter to take conceit out of an individual or a community, and it has consequently so happened that notwithstanding repeated proofs to the contrary, the people of Otago have clung to the flattering and fatal delusion of the perfection of their educational system. The 'Otago Daily Times,' which very fairly represents public opinion in this Province, speaking a short time ago about the last examinations for Scholarships in the New Zealand University, still claimed superiority for the Otago system of Education, and would only admit that Canterbury and Nelson were pressing in our rear.

This was a challenge to these Provinces, and as we had hoped and anticipated, the gauntlet has been taken up on behalf of these, and with effect, too. With such effect, indeed, that the conceit has been taken out of even the 'Otago Daily Times,' which is compelled to admit that "It does not need pointing out that, notwithstanding our lavish expenditure—notwithstanding our comparatively large population—we are at present comparatively overwhelmed; and that we have no right to claim either the first or second position in the educational arena." This important, candid, and very humiliating admission has been wrung from the 'Times' by a letter published in its issue of last Tuesday, from the Rev. F. C. SIMMONS, Principal of the Nelson College.

The facts stated in the rev. gentleman's letter are no new discovery. The 'Times' must have been aware of them long ago,—in fact, the statistics given by Mr SIMMONS appeared from time to time in its own columns; and yet this journal

continued to claim superiority for education in Otago, till Mr SIMMONS' letter appeared. But having consented to publish this letter, our contemporary could no longer maintain its own delusion, or that of its readers. Mr SIMMONS' letter is short and simple. Nevertheless, it utterly demolishes the claims set up for our educational system. Speaking of the statement of the 'Times' to which we have alluded above, the President of the Nelson College says:—"Surely this is a strange inversion. The University examination is the sole Interprovincial test yet in existence. The Scholarships awarded are given below:—

	1872.	1873.	1874.	TOTAL.
Nelson ...	6	1	7	14
Canterbury ...	6	2	4	12
Otago ...	1	0	2	3

When you reflect that we have scarcely a fourth of your local population to draw from, and less than half the number of pupils to choose from, and no University or Collegiate Institution to aid us, you will, I am sure, admit that you have inadvertently done us an injustice, which is still more apparent when you look at the list of *unsuccessful candidates* in each of the three contests, and the position which they took. The results hitherto given by the only testing machine yet in existence afford surely no more reason for relegating us as yet to the third place than for claiming the first for your Province, unless, indeed, you would have these intellectual contests regulated by the rules which govern the contests of animals, not usually looked on as intellectual in the old country." All this is severe, but very true and just.

Nelson College certainly holds the first place. This is proved by the success of her alumni. But her superiority will appear more striking, if the relative populations of the respective Provinces and chief towns are borne in mind. Nelson Province has only 26,000 inhabitants, and the City of Nelson, in which the College is situated, about 6,000; Canterbury has 60,000, and Christchurch—the seat of the College—15,000; Otago has 90,000 people, and Dunedin—the site of both a High School and a collegiate institution, the Otago University—boasts of a population of 20,000 inhabitants, with several populous suburban districts. And notwithstanding these very great advantages, behold the result as trenchingly and sarcastically put forward by Mr SIMMONS. If he ascends his triumphal chariot, who can find fault with him, no matter how acutely the sting of envy may be felt? His victory is so complete and manifestly well deserved, that even the 'Otago Daily Times' is compelled to retract its boasting, and cry *peccavi*.

We shall not now attempt to account for this state of things. But we may be permitted to draw attention to a fact bearing on the point. Nelson, with the smallest population and least resources, stands first; Canterbury, with twice as many people and abounding means, holds only a second place; and Otago, with four times the population of Nelson, and very rich endowments and appropriations from the public purse, is a bad third. But in Nelson an effort is made to do justice to the educational requirements of all denominations. freedom is respected and emulation promoted. This was the case in Canterbury, too, till lately. In Otago, however, the Education system is a close borough; no encouragement is given to private and denominational schools, so far as the Government is concerned; all are taxed for the exclusive benefit of a section—the majority; freedom is looked down upon, discouraged; competition and emulation to any appreciable extent are impossible. And what is the result? The Province of Otago has the consequence and reward, and finds herself in a position of humiliating inferiority.

THE 'OTAGO GUARDIAN,' THE POPE, AND THE FREEMASONS.

THE 'Otago Guardian' is logically stolid. All our efforts to improve our contemporary in Dialectics have been in vain. On previous occasions—*re Hifaluting!*—we endeavored, for the honor of our common profession, and as other means had failed, to shame our esteemed contemporary into something like logical writing. But to no purpose, we fear. The following paragraph from the 'Guardian' of Thursday last will prove how fruitless has been our zeal for the 'Otago Guardian's' improvement:—

"The last mail brought intelligence of the action taken by the Italian Freemasons in reference to the expulsion of the POPE from the Order. Our contemporary, the TABLET, very angrily denied the accuracy of the statement, and asserted that HIS HOLINESS had never belonged to "the