

SHIPPING.

The ship Woodlark arrived at Auckland on 1st June from London, after a passage of 91 days, with 120 Government immigrants,—all well.
The s.s. Alhambra arrived at Hokitika at 10 p.m. on the 31st ult, from Melbourne, which port she left on the 26th May. She brings 4 saloon and 18 steerage passengers, and 380 tons cargo for all ports.
The Stormy Petrel, which arrived at Lyttelton from San Francisco, after a 58 day's passage, brings 31,000 bushels of barley.
The steamer Egmont is being fitted out at Brisbane to take soundings for a telegraph cable between Sydney and New Zealand.
The Auckland Harbor Board has resolved to construct a graving dock. It is to cost £50,000, and the revenue to be obtained from the land to be reclaimed is estimated at £5000 per annum.

MAIL NOTICE.

British Mails, via Suez, will be despatched from the Dunedin Post Office. on or about the 11th instant.

A GENERAL MEETING of the Shareholders of the NEW ZEALAND TABLET COMPANY (Limited) will be held in St. Joseph's School-room, Dunedin, at 7 o'clock on the evening of the 1st July, for the purpose of appointing permanent directors.

TENDERS are invited for supplying the Dunedin Branch of the Hibernian Australasian Catholic Benefit Society with Medicine for a term of Twelve Months.—Apply Mr BUNNY, Secretary.

MACANDREW FOR SUPERINTENDENT.

THE Central Committee meet Every Evening at the Committee Rooms, High street, at 7 o'clock sharp.

All Members particularly requested to attend.

J. B. McCULLOCH, Secretary.

NEW AGENTS.

NEW AGENCIES for the TABLET have been established at—Temuka, Auckland, Otahuhu, Thames, Ouehunga, Taranaki Napier, Wanganui, Nelson, Brighton (W. C.), Charleston, Westport, Invercargill, Riverton, Bluff, Ahaura, Greymouth, Ross, Reefton, Notown, Goldsborough, and Hawksbury.

TO ADVERTISERS.

Advertisements intended for insertion in The TABLET, should reach the Publishing Office, MILLS, DICK, and Co.'s, Stafford street, Dunedin, not later than 10 a.m., of each Friday.

Subscription to The TABLET:—Single copies, 6d.; Half-yearly, by post, 12s. 6d., in advance. Remittances to be made payable to the Secretary to the Company.

The TABLET is delivered in Dunedin on payment of 12s 6d per half-year, in advance, to the Secretary.

Mr Macedo, Bookseller, Princes street south, has been appointed an Advertising Agent for Dunedin to the TABLET.

Mr Bracken has resigned the office of canvasser for the TABLET.

THE Rev J. O'Connor will say Mass at Port Chalmers to-morrow at 8 a.m.

New Zealand Tablet.

FIAT JUSTITIA.

SATURDAY, JUNE 7, 1873.

THE ELECTIONS AND THE LAND QUESTION IN OTAGO.

It may be taken for granted that, during the ensuing elections, thoughtful and commonly sensible men will pay very little attention to what is called the constitutional question. It is to be regretted that a dissolution should have been the result of the agitation of this question; and that so much eloquence is being now expended upon it. No one will be disposed to deny the ability, ingenuity, and facility of expression of the leaders of the constitutional party. But all these are compatible with an absence of common sense; and though entertaining great respect for these leaders, we cannot persuade ourselves that on this occasion they are not unreasonable.

On reading their speeches, it struck us they are the square pegs in the round holes. This Province is not their sphere; the Imperial Parliament is the loser by their being placed at so great a distance from the constitutional machine in Westminster, were they there they might grind away, and few would be disposed to find much fault with them. The House of Commons always contains a certain number of gentlemen who regard themselves as the tutelary divinities of the British Constitution, and, as no great harm results, men have made up their minds to meet the inevitable with decent resignation.

But in a new and very progressive country, in a Provincial Council which has no independent legislative power, and whose business it is to manage such affairs as fall under the care of Grand Juries in England, it is really too bad to have time and money wasted in a burlesque on the Imperial Parliament. The electors will do well to consider if the business of the Province could not be conducted better and more expeditiously without the aid of these learned gentle-

men. Common sense and common honesty are all the people want, and indeed all the people pay for.

Instead of making this constitutional question the point on which elections should turn, it would be much more to the purpose to examine the real state of the law and its administration in reference to the Crown lands of the Province. It is admitted on all hands that the prosperity of the country depends on the wise and rapid disposal of these lands. If industrious people be not settled on them in very large numbers, the Public Works Scheme will bring ruin, instead of promoting progress. The great question, then, is, which of the contending parties in Otago is the most favourable to the alienation of Government land on reasonable terms? Or, is either party really anxious to settle people on the land? These are two very important questions, the most important that can engage the attention of electors at this time.

We regret it is not in our power to afford much aid in the solution of these knotty points. Our difficulty arises from our unwillingness to say anything for or against any party. We belong to none, and we are convinced every party contains many honest men, who, though perhaps mistaken in their views, mean the promotion of the public good. These ideas restrain our pen, and we are not sorry it should be so, considering that the electors themselves know the candidates best.

One thing, however, is certain, that it is not always the man who is loudest in his professions who is the people's best friend. And what is true of an individual is also true of parties. On the new Land Act it is not now our intention to pronounce an opinion. But it does seem strange that the quantity of land which can be disposed of annually on deferred payments should be limited to 30,000 acres; and that purchasers should be compelled to settle in certain localities, no matter whether these suited their health, business, or other associations. When these things are coupled with a statement made by the author of this law in the House of Representatives—viz., "We want the land for our children,"—one naturally asks himself, Is this man, is his party, really desirous of placing a large population on the land? or is he and his party only throwing dust in the eyes of the simple? Be this as it may, whilst the patriots are squabbling over land laws, men with capital are leaving the Province and purchasing land elsewhere. Let the electors look to these things.

CANDIDATES' ADDRESSES AND THE EDUCATION QUESTION.

CANDIDATES for seats in the Provincial Council are numerous, and almost all have either published addresses, or made speeches explanatory of their views. A few only have even touched the question of Education, and fewer still have said a word in favour of justice to Catholics on this most important subject.

Our Provincial education ordinance imposes on teachers the obligation of giving religious instruction to all children unless their parents object. Taking advantage of this provision of the law, teachers—we do not say all—insist on giving religious instruction to Catholic children even after their parents had objected. This, of course, has been denied, but notwithstanding the denial, we assert most positively that such has been the case, and we entertain not the slightest doubt that such will be the case again and again. Some time ago there were published in this paper two letters on this subject, making specific charges of undue interference with the religion of Catholic children. These charges were also made in the presence of the Inspector, from whom the Bishop received a letter a short time ago, stating that an investigation had taken place, and that the charge made was true.

But observe, what was the result. Was the teacher reprimanded—was he removed? Nothing of the sort. On the contrary, an excuse was made for him: He had been lately appointed, and a copy of the new minutes of the Board had not been sent him. For these reasons, therefore, the Board thought he was not censurable for insisting on teaching Protestantism to Catholic children in defiance of their father's remonstrance.

Is such a man as this teacher fit to be entrusted with the education of Catholic children? Is a man whose ideas of religious liberty and propriety are such as to induce him to insult and defy a Catholic parent, a fit and proper person to be master in a mixed school? Can such a man be trusted in the future? Clearly not; and our conviction is there are many such masters and mistresses in the Otago schools.