

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

In a leading article in our issue of May 17 of last year, we said:—"Our (the Otago) system of education is a monopoly, which endeavors to stamp out rivalry, and which, whilst proclaiming its own perfection, and spending large sums of public money gallantly, reduces its schools to a low level of dull mediocrity, and ends in an inability to supply even one candidate for the University Scholarships, and in a Commission of Enquiry." This year it is only fair to chronicle a slight improvement,—two candidates have been raked up! Our almost perfect system has actually produced two candidates! As to the Commission of Enquiry—well, there has been none this year, but the Provincial Council has not yet met.

An appeal will be made to-morrow at St. Joseph's, and throughout the diocese, to enable Father Coleman to carry out the mission for which he has gone to Europe. The rapidly increasing wants of the diocese make it imperative that the staff of clergymen should be increased, and the persistency of the Government in endowing a godless system of education so far, at all events, as Catholics are concerned, imposes on them the necessity of providing additional schools and teachers. To this end his Lordship the Bishop has empowered the Vicar-General to bring back with him as many priests and Christian Brothers as the funds at his command will permit, and it is to enable his Lordship to send the first instalment, and form some approximate of the resources to be relied on, that the appeal is now made. It must be obvious to everyone that our staff of clergymen is totally inadequate to the requirements of the diocese, and it must be equally obvious that without the generous assistance of the faithful, the Bishop will be powerless to remedy the evil. We trust, then, that all will generously come forward according to their means, and on this occasion lend a helping hand to extend the benefits of our holy religion, and preserve the faith and morals of the rising generation.

The trial of Patrick Long for the Green Island murder was commenced on Monday, in the Supreme Court, before Mr Justice Chapman, and a Special Jury. So fully was the right of challenge exercised on behalf of the accused, that the panel was all but exhausted before a Jury was chosen. Messrs Barton and Smith defended the prisoner, and Mr Haggitt prosecuted. The trial was a careful and protracted one, lasting three days, and ended in a verdict being returned of Manslaughter. Mr Barton, on the verdict being recorded, said he was of opinion that were it not for the influence of the Press, a recommendation to mercy would have been attached, but His Honor in answer to that gentleman, perfectly coincided with the finding, and thought the Jury had conscientiously done their duty. The prisoner was remanded for sentence.

During the empanelling of a Jury in Long's case, some of the Jurors summoned did not answer to their names, and the usual penalty of two guineas was inflicted. Application was made, however, to His Honor that the fine should be increased, as many Jurors paid no attention to the summons, and the Court was placed at a disadvantage by their non-attendance. His Honor concurred with the observations made, and wished it known that in future Jurors not answering when called upon, should be fined five guineas.

The thirty-third Session of the Provincial Council was opened on Wednesday, by the Speaker (Mr J. L. Gillies). Some twenty-nine members, exclusive of the Government, were in their places, and the Superintendent's proclamation convening the Session, as also letters covering the writs for the election of two new members, having been read, his Honor ascending the Speaker's chair read the usual opening address. After touching upon several matters, including the Harbor question, Immigration, the Otago University, and the Waste Lands Amendment Act, he congratulated the Assembly on the increased prosperity of the Province, and the manifestation of progress, which have never been greater than at present.

The following amounts towards the collection for the Holy Father have been received:—Waimea, Westland, £7; the Hutt, £4.

The newly-appointed Bishop of Wellington, the Right Rev. Dr Redwood, is a native of the colony, being a son of the late Mr Henry Redwood, of Waimea, Nelson. He has received his education in France, and has been resident on the Continent for a considerable time, but of late has resided at Rome. He is probably one of the youngest Bishops in the Church, being in his thirty-fourth year.

Fires in the immediate vicinity of Dunedin have been rather frequent of late. Early on Saturday morning last, the store of Mr Popham, of Anderson's Bay, was discovered to be on fire, and before the flames could be arrested property to the extent of £1000 was destroyed, on which there had been only an insurance of £200. Luckily a store within twenty yards, in which there was a large quantity of Colonial wine, escaped unharmed. The cause of the fire is unknown, but it is supposed to have originated from a box of matches, left carelessly on a table.

It is with feelings of the deepest regret that we have to record the death of the Rev. Father Norris, which took place in Auckland on Saturday last. The deceased gentleman was in the prime of life, and was well known and deservedly esteemed in this Province. For some years he had charge of the Waseley and Oamaru Districts. His loss will be deeply felt and regretted, and has created a void that will not be easily filled. Father Norris was an Irishman, a native of Kilkenny. He made his ecclesiastical studies in the College of Carlow, and was ordained priest in St. Patrick's, Auckland, by the Most Rev. Dr Pompallier, about seven years ago. The rev. gentleman at the time of his decease was only thirty years of age. By a telegram received from Auckland, we learn that a requiem mass and funeral sermon was preached by Father Fynes, the Vicar-General, on Sunday, when the remains of the deceased gentleman were conveyed from St. Patrick's to their final resting place. The funeral was the largest ever witnessed in Auckland, over 3000 persons being present. St. Mary's Orphan

Children, boarders of the Convent, and other schools, members of the Christian Doctrine and Catholic Institute, Hibernian Society, the clergy, hearse, and the general public, followed in the above order.

THE election of a member to represent Dunedin in the General Assembly, rendered vacant by the appointment of Mr Bathgate as Resident Magistrate, took place on the 23rd ult. There was very little interest manifested during the earlier portion of the day, but towards the close of the poll the friends and supporters of Mr Wales mustered in good force. Though there were three candidates in the field, the contest lay between Messrs. Wales and Barton, the former gentleman being elected by a majority of 88 over Mr Barton, and 593 over Mr Grant, the third candidate. Mr Wales, in thanking the electors, said that the friends of his opponent had worked so hard, he had lost all hopes of success, and had prepared an eloquent speech as the defeated candidate. So that now that matters were otherwise, he was completely non-plussed. He promised by assiduity and attention to the wants of the constituency to atone for his inexperience. Mr Barton, while asserting the fact that the Water Works element had been too strong for him, bore testimony to the good feeling and fair-play which had characterised the contest, and felt some satisfaction at being defeated by so honorable and worthy an opponent. The official declaration of the poll took place on Saturday, 25th ult.

Two men had a narrow escape from meeting with a watery grave in the harbor during the week. It appears they were out in a boat, which by some means got capsized, and were it not that it occurred in close proximity to the training wall, which they managed to reach, there would have been but little hope of safety, the day being so bitterly cold as to render them perfectly helpless.

A MEETING which was most numerously attended, and which was addressed by the most of the leading men in the city, was held in the Masonic Hall, on Monday evening, to take steps for the deepening of the harbor. All the speakers were in favor of the movement, except Mr McDermid, the Mayor of Port Chalmers. A deputation waited upon the Superintendent the following day to lay before him the opinions expressed and resolutions carried, and urged that the sum of £1800 be placed on the estimates for the surveying of the harbour. After a lengthy discussion, His Honor said he could not promise to spend so large a sum without authority, but the matter should be placed before his responsible advisers, and if they took a favourable view of the scheme, no time should be lost.

THE Government immigrant vessel Asia, arrived at Port Chalmers on Monday, having on board the large number of 466 passengers, of whom there were 263 Irish, 193 English, 6 Scotch, 2 Welsh, 1 French, and 1 Russian. They were conveyed to the Caversham Barracks by the mid-day train on Tuesday, and on passing the Supreme Court, somewhat startled those inside by their enthusiastic cheering. Considering the large number of passengers, the Asia has been singularly free from illness.

THE Dunedin Choral Society gave the fourth Concert of the season, on Tuesday evening, in the University Hall. The programme consisted of "Spring" from Hady's "Seasons," and Locke's "Music for Maebeth." The spacious hall was crowded, and though the audience was not a demonstrative, yet there were evident manifestations that it was an appreciative one.

MR KERTON, late bank manager at Poverty Bay, has been fined £50 by Judge Johnson for contempt of court. An appeal was made against the decision, but not sustained.

THE Jury on the inquest held in the case of the lad Thomas Anderson, who died from injuries received through the upsetting of his coach at Beaumont, suggested the desirability of having a male passenger on the box with the driver.

INFLUENCED by some strong articles in the local press, the Corporation of Queenstown have commenced a vigorous crusade against all nuisances. The town so far is in a healthy condition, and several persons have arrived from Cromwell for change of air.

THE 'Times' states that the agitation for a woollen manufactory at Invercargill is likely to be revived, and that steps are being taken to procure the necessary preliminary information prior to submitting a scheme to the public.

AT a Maori christening at Hawke's Bay the following articles were consumed:—500 pigeons, 20 pigs, 2 tons of fish, 200 crayfish, one ton of flour, 291 loaves of bread, potatoes unnumberable, and a fair quantity of spirits.

It is the intention of the Government to obtain an enumeration of the Maoris in the Colony, the method to be adopted being schedule to each settlement, instead of to each house, as in the case of European.

THE 'Lake Wakatipu Mail' chronicles the unroofing of several stores at the Arrow. The weather appears to have been most boisterous and inclement during the past week; the mountains in the vicinity have put on a coating of snow not likely to disappear before the winter sets in.

THE drawing in the Art Union for the benefit of the funds of St. Mary's and St. Joseph's Schools, at Ahaura, has been fixed for the 24th of June. In an educational point of view, the schools are in a most flourishing condition; but the building and maintenance have more than absorbed all the funds hitherto available.

THE 'Greymouth Mail' states that each outgoing vessel bears away some of the mining community, whilst those arriving bring a number of Asiatics. This is considered a great evil; in its estimation a Chinese population is worse than none. It adds:—"We are afraid the truth of the old proverb will be exemplified—that a bad tenant is worse than an empty house."

THE death is announced of Mr Thomas Brunner, who was the first explorer of the West Coast, and for many years Chief Surveyor of the Province of Nelson.