

Wool.—The second of the series of Dunedin wool sales commenced at the Chamber of Commerce Hall on Thursday, January 8 and continued on Friday, catalogues comprising about 6300 bales. With an excellent attendance of buyers, both New Zealand and foreign, competition for certain classes was spirited, the demand being chiefly for light, fine crossbred and halfbreds; merino and heavier wools being neglected. Altogether, prices obtained should be satisfactory to growers. Next sales open on 29th of the present month.

Sheepskins.—Small catalogues only are being offered—chiefly pelts and dried country skins. For all lots there is a fair demand. Quotations are—for woolled crossbreds, 3s 9d to 6s; do do merino, 3s 4d to 5s 6d; dry pelts, 4d to 1s 3d; green do, 1s 2d to 1s 8d; lambskins, 1s 2d to 1s 10d.

Rabbitskins.—Only small lots are coming to hand, most of them inferior quality, in fact little business is being done, low season skins being from 4½d to 9½d; suckers and half-grown, 1½d to 3d per lb.

Hides.—There is no change to report, the local trade taking all hides coming forward at—best ox 2½d to 2¾d; extra heavy, 3d; medium, 2d to 2½d; light, 1½d to 1¾d; slippery and inferior, 1d to 1½d per lb.

Tallow.—There is good demand for all parcels coming to store. Prime rendered mutton, 19s to 20s; medium to good, 16s to 18s; inferior to mixed, 12s 6d to 15s 6d. Rough fat is also quickly disposed of; for best mutton caul, 13s to 14s; inferior to medium and good, 10s to 12s 9d per cwt.

Grain.—There is no change to report in this from last week, and quotations may be repeated. Wheat: Best Tuscan 3s 9d to 3s 10d; medium to good, 3s 5d to 3s 7d; best red wheat, 3s 5d to 3s 6d; medium 3s 4d to 3s 5d; broken, inferior, and rusty, 2s 6d to 3s 3d (ex store). Oats: Prime milling (bright and stout) 1s 5½d to 1s 5¾d; best short bright feed, 1s 5d to 1s 5½d; medium, 1s 4d to 1s 4½d; inferior and rusty, 1s to 1s 3d; good Danish, 1s 4d to 1s 4½d (ex store, sacks extra). Barley: For prime malting, 2s 6d to 2s 9d; medium to good, 2s 3d to 2s 5d; feed and milling, 1s 9d to 2s 2d; (ex store).

Grass Seed.—Inquiry is made for large parcels of machine-dressed rye-grass, but at no advance on prices given last week. Quotations: Best machine-dressed ryegrass seed, 4s 3d to 4s 9d; farmers' best dressed, 3s to 3s 6d; medium, 2s 6d to 2s 9d (ex store); cocksfoot seed, with little demand, 4d to 4½d per lb.

Potatoes.—Supplies of unsaleable sorts are plentiful, while good lots are coming in somewhat more freely than a week ago, prices in consequence having receded slightly. Inferior, £3 5d to £4; best, £5 10s to £6.

Chaff.—Consignments are readily disposed of, at say, for best oaten, well-screened, and cut, 42s 6d to 45s; extra good, 47s 6d; inferior to medium, 30s to 40s per ton.

CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES IN NEW GUINEA.

(Melbourne *Advocate*.)

THE Catholic missionaries in New Guinea are not in the habit of advertising themselves and their labours by making frequent appeals to the colonies for support, accompanied by touching tales of the privations they are obliged to endure in striving to convert the heathen. They prefer to leave such proceedings to others, whose tact and energy in this particular line of business is very inadequately requited by the results of their labours in the mission field. One of the consequences of the modesty of the Catholic Fathers is that their co-religionists here rarely obtain a reliable information of their missionary successes. Occasionally, however, information of a gratifying character reaches us, and usually from unexpected quarters. In the annual report of the Administrator for British New Guinea, Sir William Macgregor, whose anti-Catholic feelings are well known, says:—"All the stations of the Society of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart were visited by me during the year. Two Brothers were in charge of the school for the two native villages of Roro (Yule Island). About two dozen children knew the alphabet, and about half that number were beginning to read. On the mainland they had one establishment at work and well grounded, at the village of Mou, in charge of a kind, devoted, and intelligent teacher, Père Tonsblanc, and one Brother. School work there was progressing very satisfactorily, and a large influence for good has been gained there by the mission. Some thirty children were seen at school, about half the number on the roll, and these all knew the alphabet, and were beginning to read. Schools were opened lately, from Mou as a centre, at two other villages in the vicinity of that place. Unfortunately the members of this mission have suffered greatly from fever, apparently attributable in a great measure to defective diet, to the performance of much manual labour in the sun, and to the notorious insalubrity of Roro Island. Clearly they have undergone a great deal of suffering and hardship, and their progress has thereby been retarded. The plans of Bishop Virgus for extending the work of the mission until it embraces the whole of the St. Joseph district appear to be good, and he possesses in a marked manner the energy, intelligence, and ability required to carry them out."

Later in the report Sir William adds:—"Father Tonsblanc is a man of a very quiet and kindly disposition. The first thing one notices on entering the village is the playful trust and confidence the children have in him as they gambled and skipped around about him. They are now able to give more time to teaching work. The house was built about a year ago; the Bishop and some of the Brothers sawed the wood and built the house. The natives were hostile at first, and there were threats of violence. At 4 p.m. we had service and school, at which some fifty or sixty adults were present. The Bishop preached. There are on the school roll thirty-one boys and thirty-two girls, about half of whom were present. They all know the alphabet, and are beginning to spell. School is held forenoon and afternoon. The scholars are about seven to twelve years of age. Singing appears to be rather neglected, but all the children present seemed to know their prayers very well."

It is interesting to compare the above with the accounts of the Administrator's visits to districts under the control of the London Missionary Society at one of which the rev. gentleman in charge seemed "impressed with the utter inutility of his labours." Turning over the pages of the voluminous report, we find that the Catholic missionaries have not only instructed the natives on the east in the knowledge of Christianity, but have fearlessly made long excursions into the interior, and explored and prepared charts of the country. These charts are copied into Sir William Macgregor's report, and they certainly are not the least valuable part of it. An inspection of them could not fail to convince anyone who takes an interest in the exploration of New Guinea that the Fathers of the Sacred Heart have contributed largely to the geographical knowledge of the British portion of Papua.

THE ZINBABYE RUINS.

(Fort Beaufort *Advocate*.)

THE re-discovery of the Zinbabwe ruins during the Pioneers' march to Fort Hampden and the long details published in the English papers of their appearance, has excited the keenest interest in historical and archaeological circles. To commercial men these ruins simply confirm their hopes that at last, a new, or rather an older Klondike has been reached, and is ready for exploration. But to the scholar and the antiquarian, the widest field is open for study and speculation, we have dug up Homer, Herodotus, and a good deal of Bible history, and it now remains whether we may not also dig up in the ruins of Zinbabwe, the story of the land of Ophir, and the building of the Temple of Solomon. Neither the *Times*' correspondent nor the *Morning Post* attempts to give any clue to the date or style or builders of those mighty walls they describe. It may be that like the round towers of Ireland and the prehistoric remains of Southern Mexico, they remain for ever a puzzle to antiquaries, the silent but unreadable records of an extinguished race.

The oldest account we find of the existence of those ruins is in a work published at Cologne in Latin, in the year 1615, by the Jesuit Father Iaric, a Portuguese, in his life of Gonsales Silveira, missionary in the Kingdom of Morotopata now Mashonaland, and translated into English some few years ago by the Rev. Dr. Allen, of King-williamstown. Describing the scene of Father Silveira's labours, the writer says:—"The Kingdom abounds in gold, especially in Toroa where even now (1530), the ruins of some old stone edifices are standing, which for size and magnificence might well be compared with the buildings of the ancient Romans. Hence, some think that this was the land of Ophir. The next traveller who described the ruins was Carl Mauch, a German scientist in 1871, after a break of 300 years. He fixes the position at "Limbae" in lat. 20 south, 31 east, and 4,200 feet above sea level. One group covers the side of a hill and another stands on a bold granite kopje. The walls are built of hewn granite blocks about the size of bricks, and put together without mortar. Some walls are 30 feet high, and tapering from ten feet at the base to seven at the top, several long beams of stone, cut eight by three, project from the inner side of the walls as if to carry a balcony. Some of these stones have ornaments cut on them, lozenge shaped figures, separated by zig-zag horizontal lines." The Pioneer correspondent adds that the walls are circular and concentric with a large open space in the centre, and that they found a massive conical tower 80 feet high, and also noted a zig-zag line of ornament along the top of one of the walls. These particulars still leave us quite in the dark as to the builders or the builders. The concentric walls point to a Mohomedan origin, as well as the ornament. We know the Portuguese found a powerful civilised people in South East Africa with unlimited slave labour at their command, which they called Morisco or Moors. Whether these southern offshoots of Arab civilisation were the builders of these mighty edifices, already ruined in Father Silveira's time or whether they are of still more ancient origin—Phoenician or Egyptian—has yet to be investigated. It would be premature now to hazard an opinion.

A few weeks ago we *Irish World* published from some of the Chilean papers the account of an attempt made by a special correspondent of the London *Times*, one Mr. Thomson, to insult the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States, Hon. Patrick Egan, in the personal apartments of the President of the Republic, in the Palace of the Moneda at Santiago, and of the ready and able manner in which Mr. Egan turned the tables upon this worthy representative of the Forger. We have just learned from a special correspondent in Valparaiso the gratifying intelligence that the affair, when it became known, occasioned unbounded indignation among the Chilean people, who possess to the fullest extent the old Spanish spirit of courtesy and hospitality, and who consequently could have no toleration for a London cad. So strong was the feeling, especially in Government circles, where Mr. Egan is quite a favourite, that Mr. Thomson found it convenient to curtail his visit and clear out of Santiago immediately and out of Chile within a few days although he had previously expressed his intention to remain for several weeks.

DUNEDIN HORSE SALEYARDS.

WRIGHT, STEPHENSON AND Co., report as follows:—Only a moderate number of horses were entered to-day, and with the exception of one or two very good buggy horses and hacks those offered were only of a common description. A good inquiry was experienced from farmers for draught for harvest work, and had there been suitable horses forward a very good business could have been done in these. Notwithstanding a fair number of horses of both light harness spring cart, and inferior draught horses changed hands at quotations. We quote:—Really first-class heavy draught geldings, £22 to £27; medium draught horses, £14 to £20; light and aged draught horses, £7 to £12; good spring-carters, £10 to £15; well-matched carriage pairs, £40 to £50; well-matched buggy pairs, £30 to £40; first-class hunters, £20 to £30.