

work of the parish priest of Saint Sebastian, who formerly directed the "ex-journal" the "Croix de l'Etat." General de la Begassiere, formerly a commander-in-chief of artillery, and now at Tunis, is an intimate friend of the Bishop of Nancy.

Reports were even sent in by the Masonic spies regarding the newspapers read by fellow-officers, and every encouragement was given by the Grand Orient and the War Office for the play of personal jealousy and religious and political hate in the army.

For two deadly hours M. de Villeneuve lashed the Grand Orient and the War Office with the body of relentless original documents, covering the past four years, which he held in his hands. M. Combes essayed to create a diversion and shield his colleague. It was in vain. After a long debate the Chamber of Deputies, by 282 to 278, voted a denunciation of the War Office methods, if true as revealed by M. de Villeneuve. A clause censuring the espionage and informing was passed unanimously and by acclamation. A motion expressing confidence in the Minister of War was squeezed through by the narrow majority of four, which is practically a vote of censure on General Andre. Since then events have been moving pretty rapidly. Three Parisian papers have been publishing facsimiles of Freemason-War Office documents; the authenticity of these documents and those read by M. de Villeneuve are declared thoroughly authentic; Captain Mollin has resigned his position at the War Office and retired from the army; and a few days later a fire 'broke out' in General Andre's office, and the 'Matin' (an anti-clerical organ) not unnaturally infers that 'the compromising dossiers and registers containing the detective notes on generals, colonels, and others were being burned.' The Grand Orient has essayed a defence of its infamy. Brother Vadecard has issued a summons against M. de Villeneuve 'for complicity in the theft of documents from his office.' Vadecard's assistant secretary—the only other person besides Vadecard who had access to the documents—suddenly bolted when the trouble arose. M. de Villeneuve roundly declared that he would compel General Andre to resign, and that he 'has up his sleeve documents still more sensational than those read out by him in the Chamber of Deputies.' And, sure enough, Andre did resign! He was jettisoned by Combes, who (as a London contemporary remarks) 'naturally wished to relieve his Cabinet of the weight of unpopularity which must accrue to it from the revelations which had been made concerning the administration of the War Office.' The whole case out-Dreyfuses the Dreyfus case. But, strange to say, New Zealand papers, which sounded the loud timbrel so noisily over the Jewish captain and the Nancy runs, are, thus far, as silent as the grave over the worst conspiracy, the gravest public scandal that has taken place in European politics for more than a generation.

Notes

Toleration in Japan.

Emperor Mutsuhito began to reign over Japan in the second month of 1868. He also broke up the old feudal system, became the country's effective ruler, and witnessed and encouraged the invasion of western ideas which lifted Japan in less than a generation to the position of a Great Power. In one respect, however, Mutsuhito's reign had a bad beginning. His Government's first act was to revive the old-standing proscription against the exercise of the Christian religion within the long and straggling boundaries of Japan. Nor was the law allowed to be a dead letter. The representatives of the Western Powers remonstrated. Mutsuhito and his counsellors experienced in time a change of heart, and all restrictions on the practice of Christianity were abolished in 1872. When Jap and Russ began to hack and hew each other early in the present year, there were many who feared that the

feeling against the Czar and his Orthodox counsellors and fighting men would overflow upon Christians of other faiths resident in Japan and revive the days of religious persecution. But, says the 'Catholic Times,' 'experience has proved that the tolerance of the Japanese has not abated, and it is not likely to abate. In the four dioceses into which the country is divided there has of late been a steady increase in the number of Catholics, which is now about 56,000. It is true the Church is not nearly as strong in Japan at present as it was in days prior to the great persecutions, when the number of Catholics amounted to over 2,000,000, but the prospects of rapid progress after the war are bright. On March 17, 1865, when Father Petitjean was endeavoring to revive the Faith in Japan, a very noteworthy incident occurred to him. Three women approached him in his little church and put three questions to him: '1st. Have you a Pope? 2nd. Do you pray to the Blessed Virgin? 3rd. Are you married?' Having answered the questions and made further inquiries the priest found that there were groups of Catholics scattered through the country, who had handed down the Faith from father to son during almost three centuries, mutilating the doctrine to some extent, but preserving substantially what had been the treasure of their martyred ancestors. Pope Pius IX was so much moved by this wonderful event that he made the 17th of March in Japan a solemn Feast, to be celebrated under the title of "The Finding of the Christians."

An Inebriates' Home.

The stars in their courses seem to have fought against the Inebriates' Home at Waitati. As an experiment, it was, perhaps, worth trying. Being tried, it certainly was well worth giving up. And this the Government have resolved upon. 'What do you consider the best line in my poem?' asked a budding torturer of reluctant rhymes. 'The last,' was the critic's cruel reply. The last act is also the best in the history of the Waitati inebriates' retreat.

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

Midnight Mass was celebrated at Christmas in Balclutha. There was a very large attendance of devout worshippers.

The Very Rev. Father Brown, S.J., completed the series of missions in the parish of Lawrence on last Sunday. On Monday he proceeded to Dunedin, and during the week sets out for Hokitika.

The Hon. John Meagher, M.L.C., so well known in commercial, political, and Catholic religious life in New South Wales, spent a few days in Dunedin, arriving on Friday of last week. He was welcomed by the Bishop and clergy, and attended the banquet given by the Right Rev. Dr. Verdon on Monday. The distinguished visitor returns to the Hot Lakes this week.

In addition to Masses at 7 and 9 o'clock at St. Patrick's Basilica, South Dunedin, on Christmas Day, a Missa Cantata was celebrated at 11 o'clock by the Rev. Father Corcoran, the sermon being preached by the Rev. Father Coffey. The music was Farmer's Mass in B flat, which was rendered in an exceptionally creditable manner by the choir, assisted by an efficient orchestra. The soloists were Misses Creagh and Mahoney (sopranos), Miss Fitzpatrick (alto), Mr. J. P. Matheson (tenor), and Messrs. Kerr and E. Bush (bass). During the offertory Novello's setting of the 'Adestes Fideles' was sung, the soloists being Misses Carr and Kerr and Messrs. McEvoy and E. Bush. Mr. Eagar conducted, and Mrs. Eagar presided at the organ. The orchestra played the 'March of the Priests' as an outgoing voluntary.

At the early Mass at St. Joseph's Cathedral on Christmas Day large numbers approached the Holy Table. At 11 o'clock Pontifical High Mass was celebrated by his Lordship the Bishop, Rev. Father Cleary being assistant priest, Rev. Father Murphy (Aldm.) deacon, and Rev. Father O'Malley subdeacon. The sermon on the Gospel of the day was preached by the Rev. Father Murphy. The choir rendered Beethoven's Mass in C in a very capable manner. The soloists were Miss Fraser (soprano), Mrs. Power (alto), Mr. P. Carolin (tenor), and Messrs. Woods and Hussey (bass). As