

There was a slight shock of earthquake in various parts of the North Island on Tuesday morning.

There was midnight Mass at Christmas in the Church of the Sacred Heart, Reefton, which was celebrated by the Rev. Father Gallais, a large congregation being present. The beautiful music (says the 'Inangahua Times') was the theme of general admiration, and the choir-master, Mr. T. Phillips, together with the members of the choir, deserve great praise for their energetic and painstaking efforts. The music selected for the occasion was Mozart's 'Kyrie,' 'Gloria,' 'Sanctus,' and 'Benedictus,' and Forester's 'Credo' and 'Agnus Dei,' the 'Adeste Fideles' being rendered during the offertory. Thanks must also be given to the members of the Orchestral Society, whose valuable assistance was particularly noticeable throughout.

The Wellington correspondent of the 'Otago Daily Times' states that an interesting experiment is to be made on the railways. Two motor cars are to be obtained, similar to those now in use on the railway lines in Great Britain, and these will be employed on suburban lines solely for passenger traffic. If the experiment is successful, then the number of cars will, of course, be increased. It is hoped by this means, to give a more frequent service on such lines as from Wellington to the Hutt, from Auckland to Onehunga, from Christchurch to Lyttelton, and from Dunedin to Port Chalmers. The motive power will be electricity or benzine. It has not yet been decided on which line the experiment will be made. The bodies of the new cars are to be constructed within the Colony.

Sir J. G. Ward, interviewed last week re Mr. Massey's comment in Auckland on the disparity between the Government's expenditure on the poultry industry and the returns therefrom, said it was not to be expected that in starting a new industry it should pay from the jump. That the Government had done the right thing was shown by the fact that the returns of the second year were much larger in proportion to the department's expenditure on the poultry section, and he expected that, as in other branches the Government had taken up in the interests of producers, the industry would soon be on a self-reliant footing. With reference to the northern papers' sarcastic reference to his remarks in Parliament against Mr. Massey's suggestion that, in fairness to depositors the Savings Bank interest should be raised, Sir Joseph said he still held the belief that the raising of the Savings Bank rate was a mistake, even in the interests of small depositors, as it tended to limit employment. His motto was: Plenty of money at cheap rates. That was the way to keep the country prosperous.

The following statistics bearing on the Chinese element in New Zealand are interesting. In 1881 (says the 'Lyttelton Times'), when a poll tax was first imposed, there were 5004 Chinese in the Colony, and the number gradually dropped to 3711 in 1896. The numbers in New Zealand on December 31 of the years 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, and 1903 were respectively 3464, 3263, 3077, 2846, 2792, and 2800. The following figures show the arrivals during 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, and 1903; 28, 26, 27, 75, 69, and 132. The arrivals during the first eleven months of 1904 were 199, which indicates that the Colony is becoming increasingly popular in China. From August 3 to December 14 no fewer than 102 Chinese arrived in Wellington, of whom 67 paid the poll tax, the remaining 35 being on a return visit. Considering that the Chinaman cheerfully parts with his £100 as his price of New Zealand soil, he is evidently of opinion that the Colony will prove a gold mine to him.

Just prior to her departure for the south (writes the Glenavy correspondent of the 'Oamaru Mail') Mrs. P. Gough was made a presentation, which took the shape of a purse of sovereigns. Mr. James Breen, in making the presentation, referred to the respect and esteem in which Mrs. Gough and her husband were held by the people of the district. He concluded a masterly speech by wishing the family long life and happiness in their new home. Mr. I. Cuthbertson also bore eloquent testimony to Mr. and Mrs. Gough's many good qualities. He had always found Mr. Gough a true gentleman. Mr. Cuthbertson concluded by assuring Mrs. Gough that if her husband or herself ever visited Glenavy they might be sure of a hearty welcome. Mr. Barclay Martin also spoke in a similar strain. Mr. Thomas Corcoran, in replying on behalf of Mrs. Gough, said that he was sorry first of all that Mr. Gough had left, but on the other hand he was glad as the step meant promotion. He had to thank the donors heartily on behalf of the recipient for their handsome unlooked for present, and on behalf of Constable Gough said that they would be glad to give any of their friends a warm welcome to Winton—unprofessionally.

Good progress is being made with the work of erecting the Stoke Orphanage, which was destroyed by fire some eighteen months ago, and it is expected that the building will be completed by the end of March. The work is being carried out by day labor under the supervision of Mr. John S. Swan, architect, and there is every probability that the estimate of cost (£2850) will not be exceeded.

OBITUARY

MRS. MARY FOLEY.

(From our Auckland correspondent.)

There passed away at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. Cullen, Grafton Road, on December 21, one of those fine old Irish pioneers of the faith in this Colony, in the person of Mrs. Mary Foley. She was born in Rosscarberry, County Cork, Ireland, in the year 1808. Her maiden name was Mary Sullivan. She left Ireland in 1851, in company with the family of the Right Rev. Mgr. O'Reilly, to whom she was related. The party arrived in Auckland in May, 1852. For fifty years deceased was a parishioner of the Very Rev. Mgr. Paul, V.G., Onehunga. She reared a large family, two of whom survive her—Mr. Michael Foley, an esteemed parishioner of the Cathedral parish, and Mrs. Cullen. It is remarkable that she has seen seven Pontiffs in the Chair of Peter, and four monarchs on the English throne. Her end was happy and peaceful. Father Tormey, of Onehunga, and Father Duffy, of St. Benedict's, attended her. Solemn Requiem Mass was celebrated for her at Onehunga by the Right Rev. Mgr. O'Reilly, who came specially from the Thames to be present, and the Monsignor, assisted by Father Tormey, performed the last sacred rites at the grave and at Onehunga, where she had lived for half a century.—R.I.P.

John's References.

John was fifteen years old when he applied for a place in the office of a well known lawyer who had advertised for a boy, but he had no references. 'I am afraid I will stand a poor chance,' he thought, 'but I'll try.'

The lawyer looked him over from head to foot.

'A good face,' he thought, 'and pleasant ways.' Then he noted the new suit—but other boys had appeared in new clothes—saw the well-brushed hair and clean-looking skin. Very well, but there had been others here quite as cleanly; another glance showed the finger nails free from soil.

'Ah! that looks like thoroughness,' thought the lawyer.

Then he asked a few direct, rapid questions, which John answered as directly.

'Prompt,' was the lawyer's thought; 'he can speak up when necessary. Let me see your writing,' he added aloud.

John took the pen and wrote his name. 'Very well, easy to read, and no flourishes. Now what references have you?'

The dreaded question at last. John's face fell. He began to see some hope of success, but this dashed it.

'I have not any,' he said slowly; 'I'm almost a stranger in the city.'

'Can't take a boy without references,' was the brusque rejoinder, and as he spoke a sudden thought sent a flush to John's cheek.

'I have no reference,' he said, with hesitation, 'but here is a letter from mother I just received.'

The lawyer took it. It was a short letter:

'My dear John,—I want to remind you that whenever you get work you must consider that work as your own. Don't go into it, as some boys do, with the feeling that you will do as little as you can and can get something better soon; but make up your mind that you will do as much as possible, and make yourself so necessary to your employer that he will never let you go! You have been a good son to me. Be as good in business and I am sure God will bless your efforts.'

'H'm!' said the lawyer, reading it over a second time, 'that is pretty good advice, John—excellent advice! I rather think I'll try you, even without references.'

John had been with him six years, and last spring was admitted to the Bar.

'Do you intend to take that young man into partnership?' asked a friend lately.

'Yes, I do; I couldn't get along without John.'

And John always says the best reference he ever had was a mother's good advice and honest praise.