# THE CHURCH IN NEW ZEALAND

## MEMOIRS OF THE EARLY DAYS

(Contributed.)

### OTAGO.

Before the end of the eighteenth century, and about the same time as the foundation of the convict settlement of New South Wales (states a well-known authority), whalers and sealers began to settle in scattered groups along the New Zealand coast. A whaling station was founded in Preservation Inlet so early as 1829. In 1832 and 1834 stations were started on Dusky Bay. Other stations were situated at various points along the coast, at Aparima (Jacob's River), Oreti (New River), Awarua (the Bluff), Toitoi (Mataura), Waikawa (Catlin's River), Matau (Molyneux), Moturata Island (Taieri Mouth), Otakou (Otago Heads), Purakanui, Waikouaiti, and Moeraki. The station at Otago Heads, under the same proprietary as that off the Taieri between 1830 and 1840, employed from 70 to 80 Europeans at a time, and this nucleus of a European settlement was constantly recruited from the American, French, and English whalers and sealers, that worked the New Zealand coasts. Various published works will give some idea of the types of men represented by these whalers. Leading hard and dangerous lives, much given to coarse dissipations, they had (it is recorded) the virtues of courage and generosity highly developed, and they did a great deal to clear the way for the higher civilisation that was to follow. As regards the Native population, it is stated that between 2000 and 3000 were settled about Otago Heads in 1836, and about an additional 500 at Purakanui, whilst as many as twelve double canoes were seen in Otago Harbor at once. The old Maori settlements on the Upper Harbor, however, had already been deserted, for the remnants of the Ngaitahu and Ngatimamoe had long since been broken into scattered bands, attracted to various spots along the coast by the allurements of the whaling stations. The Natives were then, as always, on good terms with the whites, and many of the best whalers on the coast were Maoris and half-castes. But the vices of civilisation along with diseases and imported disorders soon decimated the Maoris who came in contact with the whalers. From the foregoing brief remarks an idea may be conceived of the conditions obtaining when in 1840 the little missionary schooner Sancta Maria made the entrance of Otago Harbor, conveying the intrepid Bishop Pompallier, the first messenger of the Gospel to come upon the scene.

'When the Sancta Maria was repaired at Akaroa (writes the Bishop in his diary) I set sail for the Bay of Otago, where a considerable number of Natives resided. Fathers Comte and Pesant accompanied me. Going down towards Otago with a favorable wind, we ran great danger of shipwreck. The Sancta Maria, whilst sailing along near the entrance to Otago (the coast being still but little known to sailors), ran on some hidden reefs below water, but happily broke nothing. The captain saved her from being wrecked and our lives from the perils of death by getting her away from those rocks and out into the open sea, favored by a strong breeze which lifted her off the reefs. Two days afterwards we reached Otago, all safe. The people of the bay had not yet been evangelised by anyone. My arrival amongst them had already been announced by the Natives of Banks Peninsula. They received the visit I paid them very well, and soon had a fair knowledge of the tenets of religion. During the stay I made in Otago I celebrated Mass one Sunday with as much solemnity as possible in a large store that an English Protestant merchant had the goodness to lend me for the occasion. All the Natives of the vicinity attended thereat, and some twenty English, French, and American whalers also came. The greater number of whites were Protestants, but all the same they displayed the greatest religious respect for the ceremonies of the Church. Two sermons were preached, one in English and the other in Maori, and one would have thought that on that day all were Catholics. A universal appeal was made for a resident missionary, but owing to the want of funds and also of missionaries the Bishop was unable to comply. Were it possible to accede to the request made, all these people to-day would have been Catholics.'

The people of Foveaux Strait, having heard of the Bishop's arrival and of his labors, sent a deputation to beg of him to come and instruct them. They lived at Ruapuke, and along the sea coast. The messengers who came to seek the Bishop were one European and five or six Natives from their tribes. The European was an Irishman by birth, and a Catholic. He brought with him two of his children, whom the Bishop baptised on board the Sancta Maria. An attempt to reach the settlements failed owing to contrary weather conditions, and much to the disappointment of the messengers, who were, however, supplied with books of instruction and given the assurance of spiritual ministrations as soon as practicable. After spending five or six mutually profitable days among the Natives of Moeraki, to whom the services of the missionary proposed to be stationed in Otago were promised, the Bishop left on his return to Akaroa, taking with him several young Natives of the better class to be instructed by the Fathers there.

### EARLY IRISH COLONISTS.

The mention of the Irishman from the remoteness of Foveaux Strait to greet Bishop Pompallier proves the saying that the sons of Erin are to be found in all manner of places, accessible and apparently inaccessible, and under all manner of varying circumstances. Some notable instances may be quoted here, from an interesting series of articles, under the heading 'The Making of a Nation: Beginnings of New Zealand Nationality,' written by Mr. Guy H. Scholefield, which recently appeared in the 'Lyttelton Times,' and from which I am permitted to make the following extract:—

'If ever political despair and economic desperation, extending not over one year or a decade, but over centuries, could drive a people from the land of its birth and tradition to renew its institutions and its glories under different skies, these motives were present as a goad to the Irish. Possibly there never went forth to the making of new nations so potential a body of men; such a force of character and individuality. Irish ability and common sense have been at the base of democratic institutions in every part of the New World; Irish bravery and industry have carried entrenchments of difficulty and despair unsuspected by soldiers; Irish intellect has been in the van of culture wherever leisure has succeeded to the arduous struggles of the pioneer.

'Lieutenant McDonnell, a native of County Antrim and an officer in the British Navy, purchased in 1831 the whaling brig Sir George Murray, which was built at Horeke. He acquired at the same time the dockyard at Hokianga, and forthwith sailed with his wife and family and some mechanics to settle there. He returned to Sydney in a few months. At a later period he surveyed portions of the New Zealand coast, giving the name of McDonnell's Cove to Port Ahuriri (Napier). He developed his New Zealand possessions and interested influential Englishmen in the country. He afterwards became additional British Resident at Bay of Islands.

'The earliest settlement of Irish in New Zealand—the Kellys, Lynchs, O'Briens, O'Neills, and Ryans at the Bay of Islands and Hokianga in 1836—in all probability arrived by way of Sydney, for there was then practically no intercourse between New Zealand and England. On the other hand, their doyen, Thomas Poynton, arrived seven years earlier. He was a seafarer, and, having married in Sydney, settled down in 1829 at Mangamuka, on the Hokianga River, where he followed the occupation of a timber merchant. He had a number of children, the eldest of whom was taken to Sydney to be baptised.'

(To be continued.)

# ZEPPELIN'S AIRSHIP DESTROYED

## AERIAL NAVIGATION AND ITS DANGERS

A cable message from Berlin, which appeared in the daily paper of Friday last, stated that the Zeppelin airship started from Friedrichshaven on the previous Tuesday morning, and having passed Basle, Strasburg, Darmstadt, and Mayence, after 12 hours' travelling descended into the Rhine at Oppenheim, owing to a defect. When this was remedied the ship proceeded at night to Stuttgart, where it again descended.

While the moored airship was being repaired at Echterdingen on Wednesday afternoon a sudden and violent thunderstorm struck it, blowing one of the cars into the air. When it fell to the ground it exploded, igniting the rest of the airship. Several soldiers who were holding the car were severely injured. The storm blew the blazing airship away, completing the destruction. Fifty thousand people witnessed the incident. When the blazing airship rose in the air one of the mechanics in the car jumped from a considerable height, and was mortally injured. Others were badly burnt. When he was informed of the destruction of the airship Count Zeppelin burst into tears. Profound sympathy