

Visit of an Italian Priest-Scientist

The Rev. Joseph Capra, Doctor of Science and Agriculture, who has just completed a tour of the Commonwealth, arrived at the Bluff from Hobart on Monday of last week, and later on came to Dunedin, where he was the guest of the Right Rev. Dr. Verdon. Dr. Capra is engaged in an official and scientific mission to the Commonwealth and New Zealand, one of his principal objects being to study the agricultural resources of the countries with a view to immigration. He has spent four months in the Commonwealth, and will go back there after touring New Zealand. As told to a *Southland Times* reporter Dr. Capra's story is this:—

'My purpose is to take back knowledge about the Commonwealth and the Dominion of N.Z., and to make known this knowledge in Italy, because we know very little about the Commonwealth and New Zealand. I, myself, from my boyhood have read about Australia and New Zealand. New Zealand is very interesting. No place in the world is more interesting for the scientific man. I know about not only the volcano, the geyser, the mud springs, and the other geological features, but also of the fauna and the flora. So I am personally interested.

'But my purpose is to inform Italy. Italy has made great progress, and the people are very good—not like it is sometimes described. Especially is this so in North Italy (I myself am from Milano). New Zealand has the same climate.

'We have in Italy a great number of good people; very clever in industry. They are now going to America, it is so wished in America, especially South America—the Government like Italians. But my Government like to know other directions for our population to go. For that reason we like to know the Commonwealth and the Dominion of New Zealand, but so that we may direct here not send. We do not like to make in New Zealand an Italian village. The Government assists immigrants—good. But we want them to come free, and to settle here, like any other people; like the people of New Zealand. This is the purpose of my Government. We do not like sending people under contract. We like to make the conditions of New Zealand known and to say to these people—"If you like to go, there are the conditions." But they must be free; they must be independent. They must come here and settle like the other people. I, myself, do not wish that they should come here as what you call workers and make the competition for the other workers. I would have them come like settlers.

'I have another purpose. It is commerce. In Italy we want the wool; we have not wool sufficient in Italy. We want the timber, and we want also the frozen meat. We have 33 millions and more of population. The census of 1901 gives a population of 31 millions and a-half; the census of 1906-7 gives a population of more than 33 millions. The increase was two millions, thus we are growing very much. I want to know the quantity you have for export and to make it known in Italy. Also to make known to you what we have. I am no business man, you understand me. I am very fond of the people. I spend my life and my money among the people—I am a priest. I like the people not only of my native country, but the other people. In Australia the people were very good to me. They gave me a pass on their railways and plenty of information. What I asked I obtained. I have read your official year-book. I read all about it, and I knew about New Zealand before, as I have told you. I think that between Italy and New Zealand there must be greater commerce. The countries are of the same nature; we like very much New Zealand. In Italy when I started people told me: "You must tell people there we like them." I write to the papers every fortnight, especially to two papers, *Il Sole* (The Sun), which is a commercial paper in Milano, and *Il Corriere d'Italia*, the leading daily in Rome.

'The scheme you ask me about of West Australia of two years ago, that proposal fell down. The Italian people were glad for that, and I myself, too. The Italian people (I give you my private opinion) did not like that proposal. The proposal was that the Government send a good number of families (I do not remember how many), and the Government of West Australia to give them land. But we are more independent of the Government. We do not like to be sent by the Government. The Italian Government has a very good institution. We call it the *Commissariato dell'Emmigrazione*. We like that the people should start from Italy as good people, that they should be an honor to their mother country. The Government help—that is good. We want to help the people to learn about these countries so that when they come they shall not be singular. They shall know the customs of the country and be the same as others. Also that the Government here shall give them some facilities for settling down.'

During his stay in Dunedin Dr. Capra had interviews with a number of persons from whom he received a good

deal of useful information, and to whom he desires to return his sincere thanks for their courtesy, consideration, and kindness. Dr. Capra left for the north in the early part of the week.

Blenheim

A Press Association message from Blenheim states that the school erected in memory of the late Father Lewis was opened on Sunday afternoon by his Grace Archbishop Redwood, the Mayor and the Chairman of the Education Board also attending the ceremony officially. There was a large public attendance, and about £60 was collected, enabling Father Holley to announce that the school, which cost about £800, was being opened free of debt. At a service in the church prior to the inauguration proceedings, the Archbishop preached a powerful sermon on the Catholic education system. He claimed that the system was the only perfect one in the Dominion, in that it provided for religious training as well as the equipment of boys and girls to be effective members of a civil society based on Christian principles. Speaking of the sacrifices made by Catholics on behalf of their idea of education, he said that although only one-seventh of the population, they spent every year about £40,000, and in twenty-five years they had saved the taxpayers of New Zealand £1,000,000.

Stratford

The parish schools opened last Monday, with a very good attendance.

The Rev. Father Treacy is away at present at Rotorua, on account of ill-health. The Rev. Father McCarthy, of Wellington, has taken his place here.

The plans for the additions to the church are being prepared by Mr. J. D. Healey, and before next summer Father Treacy hopes to have it finished.

Palmerston North

His Excellency the Governor has signified his intention to be present at the national concert to be held in the Zealandia Hall on March 17.

The opening sermon of the three weeks' mission was preached by the Rev. Father McDermott, C.S.S.R., at the 11 o'clock Mass to-day. The sermon in the evening was preached by the Very Rev. Father Clune, C.S.S.R., in the Zealandia Hall, which is once more temporarily fitted up for the evening services.

NEW PUBLICATION

The current issue of *Blue and White*, the magazine of St. Patrick's College, Wellington, is a bulky publication of close on 120 pages, its size being due to the fact that it is a record of the work done in the class-room and the athletic field for the past two years. The issue contains a great deal of interesting information regarding the college, no aspect of the many-sided activities of the students being overlooked. The letterpress, illustrations, and general get-up of the magazine are excellent, and very creditable to all concerned. With regard to successes of the students during the past year the editors have this to say:—The examination results disclose the fact that in Junior Civil Service we were very near the top, as indeed we expected to be. In Senior Civil Service we have the pleasure of recording a departure from old ways. Two college boys passed the examination right out at their first attempt, and we have every hope that the lucky two will have many successors this year. A very fair number passed matriculation. One student gained a credit pass in the junior scholarship examination after three years at the college. When we turn from the scholastic arena to the department of sports, we must declare at once that this year has been pre-eminently a football year. And our successes, which are detailed further on, clearly indicate that we have every reason to be proud of our achievements in the national game. Never before had we undertaken such a grand tour as that which led us to Nelson, thence to Auckland, and passing through Napier, back to Wellington. We met four strong college teams, and defeated them to the tune of 53 to 12. Never before was our own peculiar game—sharp, crisp passing amongst a set of backs moving like clockwork—brought to such perfection. On the running track, too, we have met no superior. . . . On the whole, then, the record which these pages will unfold is one of which we may reasonably feel proud, and we are confident that no Old Boy who will read these pages will deny that we have worthily upheld the *Blue and White* banner.

The Sacred Heart High School, New Plymouth, conducted by the religious of Notre Dame des Missions reopened on Tuesday last.