

Zealand,' and below 'Postage and Revenue,' the denomination being in the left-hand upper corner.

THE Very Rev. Dean Martin, who has been lately appointed Provincial of the Marist Order, passed through Reefton recently en route for Wellington, where (says the *Inangahua Times*) he will in future be permanently located, the rev. gentleman having just severed his connection with his Hokitika parishioners, whose spiritual interests he has zealously safeguarded for more than 30 years.

A KUMARA correspondent informs us that the pupils of St. Patrick's School, Kumara, were examined by Inspector Merton on the 6th and 7th of this month and secured 100 per cent. of passes. The inspector was highly pleased with the children and the work done by their teachers. It certainly reflects great credit on the good Sisters, who were untiring in their efforts to make our Catholic schools a credit to Westland.

THE following is a list of pupils from the Convent of Mercy, Greymouth, who passed the recent Trinity College musical examination conducted by Mr. Edwards. In regard to Miss McDonnell the examiner recommended her to work up for the higher degree in the college:—Senior honors: Nellie McDonnell (piano), Maggie Algie (piano). Senior pass: Lottie Guthrie (piano). Intermediate: Augusta Skoglund (piano). Junior honors: Mabel Harris (piano). Preparatory: Mary E. Noonan (violin), Dotty Lutz (piano).

The convent schools were examined recently by the Education Board's Inspector, with the result that there was not a single failure among the 134 pupils presented. The Brunner Catholic schools, also conducted by the Sisters of Mercy, were equally successful, all the children presented passing.

MR. P. E. NOLAN, of Dunedin, a member of the Railway service, and representative of No. 2 division on the Appeal Board for the South Island, and also delegate for Otago for the A.S.R.S., who was at Invercargill for his holidays, was entertained by the Invercargill branch on the 17th inst., when he was presented with a gold-mounted albert and pendant, suitably inscribed, and a sovereign case beautifully chased, in appreciation of the way he had carried out his duties mentioned above. Several toasts were honored during the evening.

A WESTPORT correspondent writes:—In the practical examinations lately held by Mr. Charles Edwards, of Trinity College, London, the following passes were secured by St. Mary's Convent, Westport. Senior grade—piano—K. Ryan (honors), M. Bailie. Intermediate—G. Scott (honors). Junior—L. Stitt (honors), Eva Bailie. Preparatory—M. O'Shea (100), H. O'Gorman, N. Carrick (all specially commended). Junior grade—violin—A. Lock, A. Greenland, M. Robinson.

In the course of a speech at the banquet tendered to him at the Bluff on Wednesday night the Hon. J. G. Ward stated that it was the intention of the Government to invite tenders for a steamers service with South Africa, the vessels calling at, at least, five ports in New Zealand and three at the Cape. It is inevitable that on the cessation of hostilities there will be a great demand for colonial produce in that part of the world, and should the Government come to some definite arrangement with steamship owners New Zealand growers will have a favorable market to supply.

THE reputed grave of St. Patrick, in the Cathedral yard at Downpatrick, Ireland has recently had placed upon it a huge granite slab, weighing about seven tons, in form similar to the grave slabs used in the fifth century—the time when the Saint lived. An Irish cross, with the simple inscription in bold letters, 'Patric,' is graven on the stone, which fitly marks the resting-place of the remains of one who did so much to spread the Gospel in Ireland. A photograph of the Cathedral, with the grave slab in the foreground, has been received by Mr. G. Redmond, of the Wellington Postal Department, from the postmaster of Downpatrick.

THE following pupils from the Convent of Mercy, Hokitika, were successful at the recent examinations in practical music held under the auspices of Trinity College, London. Senior honors.—Mary E. Bourke (singing), Mary V. Moller (pianoforte), Denis Clarke (pianoforte). Intermediate pass.—Stasio Murphy. Junior honors.—Kitty Arnel (pianoforte), Aileen Daly (pianoforte), Ruby Burns (violin). Preparatory—Pianoforte—Nan Coltman, Nellie Kidd, Clare Davey, Annie McDonald, Mammie Moyvihan, Maud Rochford, Rose Healy, Eva Murphy. Preparatory.—Violin—Ronald McDonald, Charlie Ross.

MR. J. H. GILRUTH, Government Bacteriologist and Chief Veterinarian to the Agricultural Department has left for England, his mission being to select 15 veterinary surgeons to carry out various duties in connection with the operation of the Slaughtering and Inspection Act of last session, which comes into force in April next. While away from the Colony Mr. Gilruth will visit the principal bacteriological laboratories in London and Paris, so as to make himself thoroughly acquainted with all recent discoveries, developments, and methods of working. He has been commissioned by the Government to purchase 12 sires best suited for breeding remounts, and a similar number of shorthorn bulls.

THE Hon. J. G. Ward was entertained at a banquet at the Bluff on Wednesday night when he delivered an able speech dealing with the progress and prosperity of the Colony. Mr. Ward, in referring to the proposed Pacific cable service, said that in a short time the people of the Colony would be able to send a message of 10 words to England for about 2s 6d. Mr. Ward then referred to the penny postage, which in January next would be brought into operation, and said there was not a country in the world that had done what New Zealand was going to do on the date he had mentioned. As an evidence of the prosperity of the Colony there were more than £20,000,000 in the Savings Banks—the largest amount that had ever been deposited in them—and when it was considered that we

had only 750,000 people in the Colony it was almost incredible that such an amount should accumulate. No greater tribute could be paid to the prosperity of the country or compliment to the industry and resourcefulness of the people as a whole.

WRITES our Wanganui correspondent:—At the practical examination in music by Mr. Edwards, of Trinity College, London, held at the Wanganui convent recently the following pupils were successful:—Senior division, (singing)—Ellie Moroney. Intermediate division (singing)—Hilda Flynn. Intermediate division, (pianoforte)—Emily Gibbons and Amy Hyde. Junior division, (singing)—Ada and Lily Dalziel. Intermediate division, (pianoforte)—Kate Quillinan, Ella O'Reilly, and Beatrice Wilkie. Preparatory division (pianoforte)—Leila Barnes, Winnie Hatrick, Ruth Mitchell, Annie Sullivan, Fred and Myrtle Richardson. Preparatory division (violin)—Julia Flynn, Beatrice Wilkie, and Mary Flynn. Some of the above deserved honorable mention according to Mr. Edwards, but the return of marks obtained will not reach Wanganui from London for some three months yet.

AT the Supreme Court, Wellington, Wednesday of last week, the case against Brother Kilian was gone on with, Mr. Justice Edwards, after consultation with the other judges, having decided that the counts in the indictment should be taken separately. The first count was that the accused had committed a common assault on James Joseph Owens on May 30. Messrs. Bell and Myers appeared for the Crown and Messrs. Skerrett, Wilford, and Fell for the defence. The evidence given was similar to that before the Royal Commission. The case lasted until Thursday afternoon, when the jury after a quarter of an hour's deliberation acquitted the accused. On Friday a charge of having assaulted a Maori boy named Davies was proceeded with. The case lasted until about half-past 5 in the evening, when the jury after a quarter of an hour's deliberation brought in a verdict of not guilty.

WRITING on the manner in which the Brunner Relief Fund has been managed, the *Grey mouth Star* says:—'The number of women rendered widows by the explosions was 42, while 173 children were rendered fatherless. To provide for the 215 persons thus suddenly deprived of the bread-winners, the people of New Zealand raised the noble sum of £33,105 17s 5d. The greater part of this sum has been earning interest. To-day the credit balance is £24,290 16s 1d, so that including accrued interest something like £11,000 has been paid to the widows and fatherless. There are now dependent 31 widows and 150 children. As time goes on the number will decrease until in about seven or eight years there will only remain the widows drawing money, children arriving at 16 years of age being expected to earn their own livelihood. Of the widows five have married again, and, according to the Public Trustee, are not entitled to further payment, while the three that have died require no human aid. In addition to the above, ten persons who lost sons in the explosion receive aid. The money is divided into a general fund having a credit of £21,050 17s 9d, and a contingency fund possessing £3239 18s 4d. This latter account, which started with £3000, has actually increased, the interest for the past year being £109 11s. The only charges were for two burials, £27 17s 7d. The general account shows that during the twelve months £2765 4s 9d was paid to the beneficiaries, the total departmental cost being 2s 8d. The interest accrued on this fund for the year was £777 12s 3d, so that the actual reduction for the period was less than £2000. The statement requires little comment. It reflects the highest credit upon the management, who are deserving of the warmest thanks of the community for their faithful and careful administration.'

THE Orepuki correspondent of the *Otago Daily Times* writing with reference to the Governor's visit to the shale works says:—The New Zealand Coal and Oil Company (Limited) have been working away quietly for nearly two years now in erecting works on the surface and opening up the shale and coal seams whose hidden treasures have lain dormant for probably millions of years. Oil-bearing shale has been known to exist here for some 10 or 15 years, and a syndicate having obtained a lease of about 1000 acres from the Government exploited the field, and after having had the shale thoroughly tested in the old country by competent experts, and in bulk at shale oil works in Scotland with such satisfactory results, the above-named company, which had purchased the Kaitangata and Castle Hill coal mines, added the Orepuki mineral fields to their other properties; hence the name of the New Zealand Coal and Oil Company. The capital of the company is fixed at £270,000, £180,000 being in £1 shares, now all paid up, and £90,000 in debentures, £70,000 of which have been subscribed and the balance left for calling up if required. The Orepuki works, erected with the most up-to-date plant, are expected to be in operation in January, and should earn a dividend in 1901. The Kaitangata coal has been yielding sufficient profit to provide a 5 per cent. dividend alone, and the oil is expected to do better. The shale has now been thoroughly tested on the spot, and found to be richer than the Scottish shale, containing, besides kerosene, a large percentage of lubricating oil and paraffin wax for candle-making, sulphate of ammonia, naphtha, etc. The future probabilities of mineral oils as a cheap and handy agent for producing power either as gas or steam are very great, especially in the shipping and dredging worlds, and even on railways, the engineers of which are already making inquiry into the comparative cost.

IN the course of a speech at Clinton on Tuesday night the Hon. J. G. Ward, Postmaster-General, said:—It is proposed to establish from the 1st January an 'express' delivery by telegraph messengers for letters and parcels (up to 3lb), the delivery in the meantime to be restricted to the principal centres until a full trial has been given to the new system, and gradually it will, like other reforms, be applied to such other portions of the Colony from time to time as opportunity arises. Under this system 'expressed' articles may be sent from any post office within the Colony, and such offices outside the Colony as care to reciprocate with us. The delivery will be up to three miles. For the first mile 6d will be charged, and for each