

Friends at Court.

GLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR.

(Written for the N.Z. TABLET.)

December 23, Sunday.—Fourth in Advent.
 " 24, Monday.—Vigil of the Nativity of Our Lord.
 " 25, Tuesday.—Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ.
 " 26, Wednesday.—St. Stephen, first Martyr.
 " 27, Thursday.—St. John, Apostle and Evangelist.
 " 28, Friday.—Holy Innocents, Martyrs.
 " 29, Saturday.—St. Thomas, Bishop and Martyr.

ST. STEPHEN, DEACON AND PROTO-MARTYR OF THE CHURCH.

ST. STEPHEN, the first martyr of the Christian Church, was the foremost among the seven deacons who were chosen by the assembly of the faithful to assist the Apostles in the daily distribution of alms. By the imposition of the hands of the Apostles they received the grace of the Holy Ghost, and were ordained as ministers of God with power and grace for the discharge of some of the inferior duties of the sacerdotal office. The extraordinary zeal displayed by Stephen in preaching the word of God, the success which crowned his labors and the miracles which accompanied them excited in the highest degree the fury of the Jews. They accordingly conspired to take his life, and for this purpose accused him before the Sanhedrim as a blasphemer against Moses and against God Himself. The indictment having been read, Caiaphas, the high priest and president, asked him what he had to say in his defence. Meanwhile all present were amazed at the singular beauty and brightness which shone in his countenance, so that it appeared more like the face of an angel than of a man. Standing thus in the midst of the assembly, Stephen preached boldly the Name of Jesus, reminding his hearers of the wonderful dealings of God with their fathers, and how all the events of their history, the types and figures of the Old Law and the inspired words of the Prophets, were intended to prepare the hearts of men for the coming of the Redeemer. And now, when He had come, they had rejected Him, and like their forefathers who had persecuted and slain the Prophets, they had betrayed and murdered the Just One, who was the promised Messiah and the Incarnate God. While thus he spoke, being full of the Holy Ghost, he raised his eyes to heaven, which opened before him, revealing to him the glory of God and Jesus standing by His Father's side. Whereupon he exclaimed, 'Behold I see the heavens opened and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.'

Upon hearing these words the members of the Council cried out with a loud voice and, stopping their ears as if he had been guilty of some frightful blasphemy, with one accord rushed upon him, and, dragging him outside the city gates, stoned him to death. Meanwhile the holy martyr with his dying breath invoked the name of his beloved Master. 'Lord Jesus,' said he, 'receive my spirit. And falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice saying: 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.' And when he had said this he fell asleep in the Lord.

The dying prayer of this blessed martyr, remarks St. Augustine, bore speedy and abundant fruit in the conversion of St. Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles, who in the ardor of his mistaken zeal participated in the murder of St. Stephen by charging himself with the garments of those who were employed in stoning him.

THE HOLY INNOCENTS.

A few days ago we listened at Bethlehem to the angelic song, 'Glory be to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of good will,' and we beheld in spirit the holy shepherds within the peaceful sanctuary of the stable adoring their new-born Saviour. To them succeeded the three royal pilgrims from the east, who were bidden by Herod to bring him word when they had found the Messiah, that he also might come and adore Him. Warned, however, by an angel that Herod wished to find the Child only in order to destroy Him, they returned by another way into their own country. Finding his crafty project thus frustrated, Herod became transported with rage and tormented by an anxious fear for the security of his throne. To ensure the removal of his fancied rival, he despatched a band of armed men to Bethlehem and its neighborhood, with orders to put to death all the male children under the age of two years. His cruel mandate was at once put into execution, and the innocent babes were ruthlessly slaughtered before the eyes of their mothers. This sad scene had already been predicted by the prophet Isaiah. 'A voice in Ramah was heard, lamentation and great mourning; Rachel bewailing her children and would not be comforted because they are not.'

'Weep, wretched mothers,' says a holy writer, weep 'because your children are not. Or rather, do not weep, O happy mothers, because they still exist. They are dead, it is true, but they died for Him who is the Light of the World. They were the first to die for Him who died for all. They are the first fruits among the martyrs of Jesus; they will be His delight in the kingdom of heaven and will accompany the Lamb of God wheresoever He goeth. Weep not, happy mothers, for your children yet live in the sight of God.'

Dunstan Times says:—Messrs. W. Gawne and Co. have for warded us a bottle of their Worcestershire Sauce. The sauce is quite equal in quality to Lea and Perrin's, and is only half the cost of the imported article. It has also a delicate piquancy all its own, which must make it an epicurean's delight and a joy for ever. We asked a number of people to sample the Sauce sent us, and they were charmed with it. Our readers should ask for the Sauce and try it for themselves.—*.*

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V.



R.

SMALL GRAZING RUNS OPEN FOR LEASE ON APPLICATION.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Small Grazing Runs in the undermentioned Districts will be open for lease on application at this Office on and after WEDNESDAY, 16th January, 1901:—

WAIHEMO DISTRICT: 1378 acres; £25 16s 9d half-yearly rental. Valuation for improvements, £413 1s 6d.

NASEBY DISTRICT: 196 acres; £4 1s 8d half-yearly rental. Valuation for improvements, £501 7s 6d.

SUTTON DISTRICT: 2176 acres; £27 4s half-yearly rental. Valuation for improvements, £171 12s 2d.

NENTHORN AND STRATH-TAIRI DISTRICTS: 4300 acres; £62 14s 2d half-yearly rental. Valuation for improvements, £1421 14s.

MARUWENUA DISTRICT: 1019 acres; £10 12s 4d half-yearly rental. Valuation for improvements, £318 5s.

MOUNT HYDE DISTRICT: 4500 acres; £56 5s half-yearly rental. Valuation for improvements, £132 5s.

MOUNT HYDE DISTRICT: 1254 acres; £11 15s 2d half-yearly rental. Valuation for improvements, £280 5s.

Sale plans and full particulars may be obtained on application at this office.

J. P. MAITLAND,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

Crown Lands Office,
Dunedin, 10th December, 1900.

V.



R.

PASTORAL RUNS FOR LEASE BY PUBLIC AUCTION.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the undermentioned Pastoral Lands will be submitted to public auction for lease at this Office on WEDNESDAY, the 16th January, 1901, at 11 o'clock, a.m.:—

Runs 179, 163, and 163A (grouped, Class 1), Tuapeka County, 15,200 acres; term, 21 years; upset annual rental, £100;

Run 96 (Class 1), Clutha County; 2900 acres, term, 14 years; upset annual rental, £30.

Sections 13, 14, 15, and 17, Block VII, and Sections 18 and 21, Block V., Table Hill District, Bruce County; 1128 acres; term, 14 years; upset annual rental, £14.

Possession of above runs will be given on 1st March, 1901.

Run 333 (Class 1), Lake County; 51,560 acres; term, 21 years; upset annual rental, £25.

Run 333A (Class 1), Lake County; 28,780 acres; term, 21 years; upset annual rental, £30; Valuation for improvements, £36.

Possession of Runs 333 and 333A will be given on day of sale.

The above Runs will be sold generally in accordance with the provisions of Part VI. of 'The Land Act, 1892.' Purchasers must deposit statutory declarations required by section 62 of 'The Land Act, 1892,' and pay the first half-year's rent, together with license fee (£1 1s) on fall of the hammer. Valuation for improvements must be paid before purchasers will be allowed into possession.

Sale plans and full particulars may be obtained at this Office.

J. P. MAITLAND,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

Crown Lands Office,
Dunedin, 10th December, 1900.

Wanted, about 50 clerks to help read testimonials re Tussieura. Sole manufacturer, S. J. Evans, 2s 6d.—*.*

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