

be done in the future—all these Professor Shahan regards as significant signs of the times.

Whether the view that the trend of the age is away from monarchy be accurate or mistaken, it cannot be denied that the nations are becoming more democratic, and in view of that fact the conclusion to be drawn from a study of the religious work of the century, that the Church thrives best in an atmosphere of freedom is so important that it should be carefully borne in mind by both the clergy and laity. In the early part of the century at least Catholics on the Continent had a dread of democratic rule. The French Revolution was so violent and so devastating that its effects were keenly felt for many a year. Without warning or preparation lands, revenues, ancient privileges, rights, authority, customs, administration, and teaching were swept away. The unity with the See of Peter was broken. Nearly fifty thousand priests were cast out of their places, and the consciences of millions of Frenchmen suffered untold agonies. Such incidents could not but fill the minds of the French clergy with the impression that the exercise of authority by the democracy would be uncompromisingly hostile to religion. More recently, however, the priests of France have been recognising that the greatest hindrance to the Church is not democratic rule, but the absence of individual freedom—freedom for ecclesiastics as well as for the laity to assert their legitimate power in directing the destinies of the country. And as in France, so elsewhere; the only serious obstacle to Catholic progress is any restrictions upon freedom which damp individual zeal and initiative.

NEW ZEALAND: GENERAL.

THE Postmaster-General laid the foundation stone of the new post-office at Ashburton on Monday.

A SHARP shock of earthquake took place at Nelson at three minutes past ten on last Friday morning. The direction was between north and south.

ON account of Wednesday of this week having been made a public holiday in Dunedin, we were obliged to go to press on Tuesday evening.

THE census of New Zealand will be taken for the night of Sunday, March 31. The Registrar-General is now making arrangements.

THERE were 118 more marriages in the Wellington district in 1900 than there were in the preceding year. The birth rate only shows an increase of 11. The deaths are 55 less than in 1899.

ALDERMAN GEORGE WHITE, of Norwich, says the difference between a traveller and a bona-fide traveller is that the one is thirsty because he travels, and the other travels because he is thirsty.

RAHI KARENGA, daughter of a noted Maori chief, who died at Ohinemutu the other day, was a descendant in a direct line from the great ancestor, Tama Tekapua, captain of the Arawa canoe, which arrived in New Zealand some 20 generations ago.

THE return of immigration to and emigration from the Colony during the month of December shows that the arrivals were 2758 and the departures 1576, as against 2290 arrivals and 1236 departures during December 1899.

WE notice that a pupil of the Sisters of Mercy School at Newtown, Roy Girling-Butcher, qualified for a scholarship at the recent examination of the Victoria College at Wellington. We understand that he was the only candidate presented for the examination from the Catholic schools within the University district.

A DECISION recently given by Mr. Burgess, S.M., at Pembroke, upsets the preconceived idea that a sheep worrier can only be justifiably killed when caught in the act of killing a sheep. The magistrate, in effect, held that if a dog can be proved to be a worrier it can be killed anywhere and at any time.

THE formation of the Heriot-Edievale section of the Tapanui branch railway, a distance of six miles, will be commenced next month. The completing of this portion of the will make Edievale the temporary terminus. It has not yet been definitely decided what the next stage will be.

BARLEY-GRASS threatens Canterbury; dog-daisy and ragwort Taranaki. The two last-mentioned pests are spreading with great rapidity over the Taranaki province. There is no doubt that if stringent means are not taken to destroy these noxious weeds before seeding it will not be long ere good productive pastures will be turned into waste land.

THE *Southland News* reports that the fall in the value of wool compared with the prices ruling at the January sales in Invercargill last year represents fully £2 10s per bale. There were close on 6300 bales offered at Tuesday's sale, and if these had been all sold the pecuniary loss to growers would have been £16,250. A quantity was passed in for next sale, by which time sellers expect a rise will occur.

VERY REV. FATHER LANE, of the Lower Hutt, Wellington, is to leave on the 24th inst for a trip to the Home countries. Father Lane has been 18 years in the Colony, 15 of which have been spent by him in the Hutt parish. Father Lane's numerous friends all over the Colony hope that he will have an enjoyable time of it during his absence. It is understood that he is to be accompanied by the Rev. Father Ainsworth.

THE returns for the four-weekly period ended December 8 show that the revenue of the North Island section of the railways was £53,730, against £48,981 for the corresponding period of 1899, while for the Middle Island the figures were £77,353 and £70,736 respectively. The expenditure on the North Island sections amounted to £34,216, or 71.88 per cent. of revenue earned; while on the Middle Island sections the figures were £29,58, or 65.38 per cent.

AN enthusiastic meeting of railway men who have recently been granted an increase of pay was held in Timaru on Saturday, when it was decided to ask the co-operation of railway men in other parts of the Colony in donating 6d per member to commemorate the increase and at the same time show their appreciation and esteem of his services by making the Minister of Railways a suitable presentation.

THE members of local bodies (says the *Tairi Advocate*) some times indulge in pretty severe criticism of each other. At a meeting of such a body in the Tairi the other day, one member, in speaking on a motion proposed by another, used such expressions as 'Sorry the motion did not come from a man of more reliable nature,' 'Liked to have seen a motion of such noble motives come from a man of steadier and sterner habits.'

PROFESSOR MORRIS, of the Melbourne University, who is writing an Australian history of Captain Cook, paid a visit to Cook's Cove, at Tologa, on last Friday. At the spring on a hillside, which is overgrown with scrub, he found a substantial oaken oak, which, it is thought, might have been placed there by an early navigator. On Papa Rook, alongside another spring, are cut certain letters, which are believed to be the initials of a member of the crew of Cook's vessel.

A SYDNEY paper says: 'Mr. Seddon will go back to his Parliament a better Federalist than he came. The spirit of the ceremonies and celebrations impressed him strongly. He proposes a Federal steam service between Australia and his State. When spoken to in Sydney last week Mr. Seddon intimated that before New Zealand could be brought into close contact with Australia steamers like the *Lucania* and *Campania*—the mammoth Atlantic liners—would have to be running between the two.'

THE Rivers Commission took evidence at Livingstone on last Thursday in connection with the proposed proclamation of the Awamoko Stream as a sludge channel. The evidence of several farmers holding lands along the river was to the effect that they were partially dependent on the stream for the supply of water for their stock and domestic purposes, and the discharge of tailings down the creek would result in portions of their sections being destroyed by silt. On behalf of the miners it was asserted that unless the goldfield in the valley of the Awamoko was opened up numbers of miners would be compelled to leave Livingstone, as the present field was approaching exhaustion. On Saturday the Commission visited Gore.

IN the course of an interview granted to the *N.Z. Times* special in Sydney, Mr. Henniker Heaton, M.P., said he was a great admirer of the Hon. J. G. Ward, Postmaster-General of New Zealand, who, he claims, has been largely instrumental in instituting the penny postage scheme in this Colony. In Mr. Heaton's opinion New Zealand is more highly thought of in Great Britain than any of the Australian colonies. He said he would be very angry if New Zealand is ever stupid enough to join the Australian Commonwealth, because she is a separate entity, and occupies a very unique position in the world. New Zealand is particularly well thought of by Englishmen and she occupies a higher position in the esteem and regard of Englishmen than any Australian Colony, because they regard it as more nearly approximating to English conditions.

THE *Britannic* with the Imperial troops on board is expected to arrive at the Bluff on February 2. The Postmaster-General has advised the Mayor of Dunedin that should the steamer keep up to time the troops will arrive in Dunedin by special trains about 6 p.m. same day, the *Britannic* coming on to Port Chalmers and arriving there on the evening of the 2nd. The troops will proceed from Dunedin to Christchurch by special trains on the morning of the 4th. This will, as you will observe, give the troops two nights and one clear day in Dunedin. Would you kindly let me know what arrangements can be made for putting up the men. Roughly speaking, there are 1000 troops and 50 officers. The officers would require to be accommodated at the best hotels, and the troops billeted as comfortably and as many together as possible. The citizens of Dunedin need not trouble about horses. This will be arranged for by the Government.

NOTWITHSTANDING the erection of a new church in the Waihao district a few years ago (says the *Oamaru Mail*), and the consequent easement in St. Patrick's Church, Waimate, it is found that the increasing Catholic congregation at Waimate requires a larger church. This matter has been engaging the consideration of the clergy and congregation for some time past. A very successful bazaar and carnival were held during the Christmas holidays, which realised about £500 towards this object. A meeting, under the presidency of Rev. P. Regnault was held on Sunday last, which was attended by nearly all the heads of the congregation, and at which after considering several proposals as to size and material for the new building it was resolved that the congregation approve of the building of a new church in wood, of sufficient size to meet the estimated requirements of the congregation for about 30 years. In course of the discussion it appeared that there will probably soon be a move for the erection of a new Roman Catholic Church at Makikihi. The rev. chairman said he would forward the recommendation of the meeting to the Bishop.

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