

'We haven't got any aquarium,
We don't possess a Zoo;
No African blacks with dusky backs
Tattooed red, white, and blue.'

But we can have a sensation occasionally. The other day a decent young fellow was found roaming about demented on the hills at the back of Dooley's. He was very respectably dressed. He was nearly as well dressed as the men you see driving the self-binders in the advertisements. It came out on inquiry that he had been a salesman in a drapery establishment. While he was at work as usual on Tuesday, a lady came to his counter and generously spent three hours developing the young man's muscles by getting him to take down and unroll piles upon piles of blankets. At the end of the third hour she casually remarked that she didn't intend to make any purchase; that she had merely dropped into the shop to look for a friend. 'Well, ma'am,' replied the exasperated shopman, 'if you have the slightest suspicion that your friend is among these blankets, I'll give them another toss over.' The manager heard the remark, and discharged him on the spot for his courtesy. The young fellow changed his coat, straightened his 'dickie,' left all he owed to the sharebrokers to his mother, and took himself off from civilisation. 'There is a woman at the bottom of everything,' as the man said when the maid fell into the well.

Quips

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN.

There will be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at St. Joseph's Cathedral on Sunday from the 11 o'clock Mass until Vespers. The usual procession will take place in the evening.

His Lordship Bishop Verdon administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to over 200 children at St. Patrick's Basilica, Oamaru, on Sunday.

On Friday evening a social and musical entertainment will be given in St. Joseph's Hall in aid of the South Dunedin Literary Club's piano fund. The object is a necessary one towards materially assisting the club in the success of the forthcoming winter session, and will no doubt be well patronised.

The Superior-General of the Irish Christian Brothers has addressed a letter to the Christian Brothers' pupils throughout the world on the subject of the new novitiate and training college now in course of erection in Dublin. The Superior invites the pupils of each country to provide a prize for the monster bazaar to be held in 1903. In the course of his letter he points out that the benefits from the new building will be world-wide as the bulk of the Irish Christian Brothers throughout the world receive their training in Dublin.

The new Catholic Church at Cardrona will be solemnly blessed and opened on Sunday, May 11. The occasional sermon will be by a distinguished preacher, and there will be special music appropriate to the solemn occasion. The new church is a very handsome building, and is one of which the pastor, the Rev. Father J. O'Donnell, and the Catholics of the district may be proud, as it is a practical proof of their faith and generosity. The interior has been well fitted up, and the furnishing is complete in every detail.

The Very Rev. Father Boyle and the Rev. Fathers Henry, McCarthy, and McEnroe, who had been engaged in giving missions in various parts of the diocese of Dunedin for some months, left for the north by the Waikato on Tuesday afternoon. Before returning to Sydney they intend to spend a short time at Rotorua. The local clergy and a number of the laity went down by train to Port Chalmers to see them off by the steamer. During the time they have been in the diocese of Dunedin the Vincentian Fathers have done an incalculable amount of good, their zeal and earnestness being productive of great spiritual benefit to the people among whom they labored.

A very pleasant evening was spent on Monday last in St. Joseph's Hall when a miscellaneous entertainment was given in aid of the home for the aged poor. There was a large attendance, and the efforts of those who had the arranging of the entertainment met with well-deserved success. To Miss Staunton in an especial manner praise is due, as she was mainly responsible for the getting up of the programme. The items set down for the musical part of the programme were well received, songs being contributed by Misses Anthony, Meenan, Davis, and Mr T. Anthony; and instrumental music by Mrs Butler, Miss Duggan, and Mr Myles.

Amy Castles Concert.

In consequence of the non-arrival of the Melbourne steamer on due date the Amy Castles concert had to be postponed until this (Thursday) evening. In another part of this issue we have referred to the career of this talented young vocalist, and therefore it is unnecessary for us to say anything on that score here. The recital takes place in the Agricultural Hall, and from the number of tickets already disposed of it is safe to say there will be a record house. Our readers in Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland, will note the dates, advertised in this issue, on which Miss Castles' recitals will take place in these cities, and be sure to secure tickets at the earliest possible opportunity.

NEW ZEALAND: GENERAL.

A CASE of plague has been discovered at Auckland. The patient was taken ill on the 19th ult., infection being caught through handling cargo from an infected port, and died on Monday.

THE Federal Government, having agreed to deliver New Zealand penny post letters in Australia, this Colony has now agreed to a halfpenny terminal rate on cables. The new rate as to letters will not take effect till the Order-in-Council is gazetted.

IT is understood that the Railway Department is making arrangements to cut down the time-table of the Dunedin-Christchurch express train by half an hour, and the change is likely to be made shortly. The details are being worked out now.

IT is understood that the Government has made a tentative offer to the Manawatu Railway Company on a basis equivalent to 30s per share for the line itself, allowing the company to retain and realise some of the other assets.

LABOR is so scarce in the Timaru district just now that men are being sent for from Ashburton, Christchurch, Wellington, and anywhere they can be obtained. Threshing operations are interfered with by reason of the scarcity of labor.

AMONG the officers specially mentioned in despatches by the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa are Major Bauchop, Lieutenants Dan Hickey (Dunedin), Emerson (Napier), and Overton (Christchurch), together with Farrier-Sergeant Quinn (Wanganui).

THE Wellington Harbor Board has resolved to raise the salary of its secretary and engineer, Mr W. Fergusson, from £1600 to £1750 per annum, and to enter into an undertaking to retain his services for five years. Mr. Fergusson lately received the offer of an appointment at more than the latter figure.

A TELEGRAM from Morrinsville (Auckland) states that a Maori, said to be 100 years old, feeling unwell, told his friends that he would bury himself, and disappeared on Friday. Eight men searched for him without success. They then returned to his whare hungry, and ate some honey they found there. Five died, and the other three recovered, after much suffering.

MR. OUTTRIM, chairman of the Victorian Factories Commission, interviewed in Sydney, said the Commission had absolutely a unique experience going through New Zealand—a Colony where there were no unemployed. The population generally seemed in a prosperous condition. They examined a large number of employers and employees, who were unanimously of opinion that the principle of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act was a sound one. They would be very sorry indeed to go back to the old order of things. He spoke highly of the simplicity and admirable administration of the Conciliation Court.

WE have to thank Messrs. Angus and Robertson, of Sydney, for a copy of the 'Guide to Musical Examinations,' by Mr. G. T. Cotterill, headmaster of the Paddington Superior Public School. The work will no doubt be very useful to teachers and others preparing for musical examinations in New South Wales, as it presents the papers set for the examinations held for the past three years by the Department of Public Instruction of that State. Although the work has been published primarily with the object of assisting students for the State examinations, still there are many matters in it which will assist those studying for the examinations under the auspices of the Home colleges.

THE Telegraph Department advises as follows:—As already advised, the Pacific cable is now open for general traffic. The rates will be as follows:—To New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria, and Western Australia—Ordinary, 1½d per word; Government, 3½d. Tasmania—Ordinary, 5½d per word; Government, 4½d. The foregoing reductions also apply to messages sent per the Eastern Extension Company's cables, except for Government messages. To Norfolk Island—Ordinary, 3d per word; Government, 2d. To Fiji—Ordinary, 8d per word; Government, 6d. These rates apply to the Pacific cable. International messages will also be accepted for transmission via the Pacific cable, and the rates, until further advised, are the same as over the Eastern Extension Company's cable. Press messages may be accepted for Fiji via the Pacific cable at 3d per word, plus 6d per 100 words or fraction thereof. Other press rates by either route will be the same as the rates now charged over the Eastern Company's cables.

On Tuesday evening a gathering of a social character was held in the Shamrock Hotel, Dunedin, when Mr Joseph Toomey was presented with a gold watch by a few of his friends on the occasion of his retirement from business. Mr A. Thomson, who presided, eulogised the many good qualities of the guest of the evening. On Friday evening a social gathering was held in the Mechanics' Hall, Waikouaiti, for the purpose of giving a send-off to Mr and Mrs P. Toomey, who have been residents in the district for some years. The Mayor, who occupied the chair, presented Mr Toomey on behalf of his many friends in the district, with a handsome Mosgiel travelling rug, and Mrs Toomey with a beautiful silver-mounted lady's companion. Mr Toomey was also the recipient of a Maori spear and axe from some Native well-wishers.

A DEPUTATION waited on Sir J. G. Ward in Dunedin on Saturday morning for the purpose of bringing under his notice the urgent necessity for a scale of cheap fares that would bring an excursion to Lake Wakatipu within the reach of all classes. In reply, the Minister for Railways made an important announcement that considerable reductions would be made in passenger fares within a very short time. He said he had been fully impressed with the absolute necessity of the railways of the Colony being used so as to enable people to get to those places at a reasonable cost. With