

devouring zeal for the well-being of the toilers, have as much true sympathy for the workers, as much genuine desire to improve their condition, as they have of fearful commiseration for the possible woes of the problematical inhabitants of the planet Mars. For them the working man is simply a voter, a political tool, a sort of commercial asset to be exploited for the benefit of the exploiter only. The present writer may claim to know Belgium fairly well. He has been residing in the country for several years, has visited on many occasions all the larger towns, has travelled through most parts of the provinces, carefully observing the social life of the people, and inquiring, as opportunity offered, into their economic and industrial condition. As the result of what he has seen and heard, he ventures to think there is more downright poverty, more abject misery, in London, or any two of the great English cities, than exists from one end of Belgium to the other. He has not yet heard or read of a single death from starvation in any part of the kingdom, an event not quite unknown in rich and happy England. We have not here, it is true, the colossal fortunes so common in Great Britain, but all the same, the public wealth is very considerable and, better still, is more widely and equitably distributed. For the toiling masses there is

#### Abundant Employment,

and if the scale of wages is relatively low (as in all the Continental countries), it must not be forgotten that living is comparatively cheap, that thrift is a national habit, and that the common people are content with a modest standard of domestic comfort. Then consider how light is the incidence of taxation. There is no country in Europe, save Switzerland and Russia, where the burden of direct taxation falls less heavily on its inhabitants than it presses on those of Belgium; as regards taxes on articles of necessary consumption, the amount per head is the trifling sum of 5s. I may add that the quota of indirect imposts paid by the working classes is more than refunded to them in the shape of old age pensions, reduced fares for railway travelling, exemption from house tax, subsidies to benefit societies, etc. A further confirmation of what I have remarked concerning the satisfactory social condition of the mass of the working population is to be found in the returns of

#### The State Savings Bank.

an institution which corresponds to the Post Office Savings Bank in the United Kingdom. At the close of the year 1900 the amount invested was no less than 600 million francs, or close upon 22½ millions sterling, which compares very favorably with the sum standing at the same date to the credit of a similar class of investors in the British Savings Bank. The number of depositors was 1,757,916, or more than a fourth of the entire population. Against the Government now in office, or against any of the Governments that preceded it since 1884, no charge of incompetency, maladministration or want of active interest in the welfare of the workers can be adduced that will bear a moment's scrutiny. If Liberals and Socialists declaim against 'Clericalism,' as is their wont, it is because Catholics are in possession of power, not because they abuse it. Never in its previous history was the country so prosperous, never were the public finances in a more satisfactory state, never was such encouragement given to education, and never did the Legislature occupy itself so actively and so successfully with measures to ameliorate the lot of the majority of the people. To the Catholic Government is due the credit of powerfully aiding the development of trade,

#### Diminishing Taxation,

rendering the military service less onerous by introducing voluntary enlistment, and granting remuneration to the private soldier. To the Catholic Government we also owe it that the franchise has been placed on a broad and extremely liberal basis, that woman and child labor in the mines has been abolished, that great facilities are given to the working classes for the acquisition of their dwellings, that adequate protection is afforded to the workers in mines and factories, that old-age pensions have been instituted, that friendly societies have taken so remarkable and gratifying an extension. And what a splendid array of religious, social, and charitable institutions have been founded and maintained through the zeal and generosity of the Catholic clergy and laity. Wherever we turn we find numerous schools, orphanages, patronages, workmen's clubs, workmen's hostels, and kindred works, all devised in the moral and material interests of the toilers, whilst for the agricultural laborer and the peasant farmer excellent societies have been organised in all, or nearly all, the rural districts, to meet their special necessities. In no other country have Catholics shown such alacrity to carry out both the letter and the spirit of the encyclical instructions of Leo XIII. on the Social Question, and in no other country has obedience to the Pontifical counsels been followed by more happy results.

### A Round Robin.

It often happens, especially at sea, that men who have a grievance wish to present a petition for redress to those in authority over them, yet no man wishes to make his name prominent. So some one invented the fashion of signing the names in a circle in which it is impossible to tell which was written first. This peculiar petition is called a round robin, which is merely a corruption of the original French name *round ruban* (round ribbon).

Do not forget whenever you are suffering from a Bad Cold to send immediately for RUSSICURA.—\*.\*

Should you be afflicted with chilblains, WITCH'S OIL will give you immediate relief. A certain cure.—\*.\*

## Diocesan News

### ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON.

(From our own correspondent.)

July 12.

The Ven. Archdeacon Devoy will conduct the services at St Patrick's Church, Masterton, to-morrow.

Mr. D. Twohill, who was on a visit to Masterton, sang 'Ora Pro Nobis' as an offertory piece at St. Patrick's Church on Sunday last.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament was held at St. Mary of the Angels' on Sunday last. The music both in the morning and evening was excellently rendered.

Rev. Father Bowden, one of the professors of Measey Seminary, who has been spending part of his holidays at the presbytery, Boulcott street, returned on Thursday last.

Rev. Father Costello has been appointed to the newly-formed parish at Marton, which includes Hunterville, Tarakina, and Bulls. He will take up his residence at Marton, which is the centre of the district.

Signor Borzoni, who has taken up his residence in Wanganui, passed through Wellington this week. It is his intention at the coming bazaar to hold a military review representative of the whole of the British regiments.

At St. Patrick's Church, Masterton, on June 26, the marriage of Mr C. H. Russell to Miss R. Toucher, youngest daughter of Mr John Toucher, an old and respected resident of the town, was solemnised. The Very Rev. Dean McKenna performed the ceremony. The bride was attended by Miss M. Hanly as bridesmaid, and Mr B. Brown acted in the capacity of best man.

The success which attends the various functions in connection with the Marist Brothers' Old Boys' Association is proverbial, and a dance held under its auspices in Spiller's Hall, Boulcott street, was no exception. Messrs P. J. Twohill, J. Strauford, and H. McKeown (secretary) acted as Masters of Ceremonies, and were indefatigable in their efforts to make the evening enjoyable. The annual Association social will, in all probability, be held in the last week of August.

### WANGANUI.

(From our own correspondent.)

July 12.

The Rev. James Tymons, S.M., of St. Patrick's College, is spending the winter holidays with his parents, who have decided to make Wanganui their home. On Sunday last the Rev. Father Tymons celebrated Mass and preached on the Gospel of the day (Matt. vii. 15-21). He again occupied the pulpit in the evening, preaching an impressive sermon from the text: 'Hitherto you have not asked anything in My name. Ask and you shall receive; that your joy may be full' (John xvi., 24).

From the Mangaweka *Settler*, of June 28, I learn that the Catholics of Mangaweka had a very successful bazaar about the end of last month. Great enthusiasm was displayed in working up the venture. People of all denominations gave their hearty co-operation, thus testifying in a practical manner to the high esteem in which Rev. Father Lacroix is held by the whole community. When such unity and energy were shown, it is not surprising to find that the financial result was most satisfactory.

The Wanganui *Herald*, of July 5, evidently in an unguarded moment, published a paragraph about the story—now three years old—of the 'conversions' to Protestantism of several hundred French priests. A correspondent under the nom de plume of 'A Catholic Lie der' at once took the matter up, and showed that this 'remarkable movement,' as the *Herald* called it, was fully exposed in the N.Z. TABLET of July 26, 1900.

### DIOCESE OF CHRISTCHURCH.

(From our own correspondent.)

July 14.

The Very Rev. Dean Foley is still in charge at Akaroa, and besides parochial work is engaged in collecting for the Cathedral building fund.

On Sunday last his Lordship made a visitation to the Church of the Passion, Brackenbridge, thus having visited all the churches in the scattered parish of Hawarden. Throughout the district the Bishop's appeal on behalf of the Cathedral has been generously responded to, and the scheme of a sixpenny weekly collection has been heartily taken up.

At a meeting of the Catholics of Addington in connection with school requirements, it was decided to make a final effort by voluntary contributions and entertainments to pay off the existing small balance on the church building erected a few years ago, and then take immediate steps to have erected a new school. A bazaar at an early date was one of the means suggested and likely to be acted upon to raise the necessary cost, said to be approximately £500.

His Lordship the Right Rev. Dr. Grimms made an episcopal visitation on Sunday the 6th inst. to St. Raphael's Church, Hawarden, being received by the rector of the parish, the Very Rev. Father Price. His Lordship preached at the 11 o'clock Mass, and appealed for funds to enable him to carry on the work connected with the Cathedral. The appeal was liberally responded to, the sum of £75