

THE Immigration and Public Works Loan Bill provides for a four million six per cent. loan, £300,000 to be devoted for railways already authorised; £50,000 for the gold-fields; £60,000 for the North Island roads; £500,000 for immigration; £390,000 for miscellaneous public works, including buildings, light-houses, telegraphs. Short dated debentures, with a currency not exceeding seven years may be issued pending the floating of the loan, but at no one time is the amount of debenture to exceed the sum borrowed.

THE following return shows the amount of Customs revenue collected at the undermentioned ports during the quarter ending 30th June, 1874, with the amount for corresponding quarter of last year:—Auckland, £55,552, as against £43,638 in 1873; Wellington, £25,871, against £22,096; Lyttelton, £42,824, against £28,831; and Dunedin, £88,200, against £66,578 in 1873. From the above it will be seen that the increase in revenue at Dunedin has been £21,622, yielding a sum considerably over three times that of Wellington, double that of Lyttelton, and one and a half in excess of that of Auckland.

Two goats were discovered the other day at Waipori snow bound in a drive, in which they had taken shelter from the storm. They had been missing sixteen days, and had evidently been imprisoned all that time by the snow drifting over the mouth of the drive. During their enforced confinement (says the 'Tuapeka Times,') they each gave birth to a kid. When discovered the young ones were dead, and the old ones as may be imagined had very little life left in them.

A MEETING of immigrants has been held at Wellington, with the object of petitioning the Government that the remaining debt upon their promissory notes may be remitted. Several speakers alleged that they were unable to obtain an interview with the Attorney-General in London, though they tried repeatedly, and that they were led to believe the Government would not trouble them for the recovery of their promissory notes unless they acquired property.

By a 'Gazette' notice, His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to appoint the following Mayors Justices of the Peace, under the "Otago Municipal Corporations Act 1865":—Messrs David Anderson Jolly, Cromwell; Thomas George Betts, Queenstown; Alexander Innes, Arrowtown; John Lyon Macdonald, Riverton; Andrew McKinnon, Port Chalmers; Thomas Pratt, Invercargill; James Samson, Alexandra; Samuel Edward Shrimski, Oamaru. Mr John Honywill has been appointed Deputy-Registrar of Marriages, &c.

### NEWS IN BRIEF.

Statues in Russia are so rare that those which have been erected, puzzle the country-folk, who think them idols.

A fine of £32 was inflicted on a milkman in Ireland for mixing water with his milk. This is the heaviest fine inflicted under the Adulteration of Food Act.

An oval mass of iron, weighing twenty-five tons, has been discovered in Western Greenland. Opinions are divided as to the origin of the mass, which the discoverer does not hesitate to consider a large meteorite.

The assertion that total darkness prevails during the Arctic mid-winter, appears to be disproved by the observations of Dr Bressel during the Polaris expedition. At the winter quarters of the party, there were no fewer than six hours of twilight on the 21st of December.

For selling sawdust under the pretence that it was fine "bird-eye" tobacco, a Glasgow tobacconist has been sentenced to two months' imprisonment.

The Waterloo was the first medal given to all ranks alike; and it was also provided that the ribbon should never be worn without the medal being attached.

Passengers to the Pacific by the railroad across the American Continent, breakfast in the Sierras with twenty feet of snow around them; four hours later they find wheat five inches high; and the next day they see peach and pear trees in blossom.

A curious light has been thrown on the profits of the "butties," or middle-men in collieries, by a case lately heard before a Warwickshire bench, in the course of which, it was extracted from a "butty" under examination, that his profits for a year on the labor of 150 miners amounted to more than £4000.

In the seventeen years between 1854 and 1871 the military death rate in India was reduced from 69 per 1000, to 34.

Penny postal cards have been employed between Switzerland and the United States.

The building of St. Paul's occupied thirty-seven years. It was finished in the time of Queen Anne.

In Sweden, out of 885,000 children of school age only 9,131, or 3 per cent, are uneducated. Of the 7,500,000 voters in the United States, more than 1,000,000 cannot read the ballot cast.

There are said to be 40,000 commercial travellers in the United States.

In 1808 the importation of palm oil into Great Britain did not exceed 200 tons a year; at present it amounts to 50,000,000.

Within the period of twenty-nine years—from 1844 to 1874—42 Atlantic steamships have been lost, being an average of 1½ per year.

Five feet five inches is the present infantry standard in Great Britain. In no other army in Europe is it so high.

The gross income of the Duchy of Lancaster has, in a quarter of a century, increased from £29,000 to £59,000. The net payments to Her Majesty have contemporaneously risen from £12,000 to £40,000.

In Europe the formal dominion of England is confined within very narrow limits. It includes Heligoland, with five square miles of territory; Gibraltar, with less than two; and Malta, with 115.

A curious mode of trying the title to land is practiced in Hindostan. Two holes are dug in the disputed land, in each of which the plaintiff and defendant's lawyers put one of their legs, and there remain until one of them is tired, in which case his client is defeated.

### CAPTAIN HUTTON AND THE 'TABLET.'

WE have received the following from Captain Hutton in reply to our remarks in last week's issue:—

To the Editor of the NEW ZEALAND TABLET.

SIR,—The report of the last meeting of the Athenæum Committee, although it may state correctly a part of what I said at that meeting, certainly conveys a very erroneous idea of my opinions. I am neither a Spiritualist nor a Materialist, but think that, as a member of the Athenæum Committee, I have no right to use that position to advocate my own religious opinions, whatever they may be, to the exclusion of others. I voted for the admission of the TABLET, as I voted for the admission of all other papers that I considered were not intentionally immoral. And if I mentioned the TABLET by name it was only as one of a class of papers advocating particular doctrinal views, which had been placed together on the table, and I by no means wished to individualise it particularly. By blasphemy I simply meant that these papers sometimes contained articles offensive to the religious feelings of others; but the word was not the best that I could have employed, and I regret having used it, as I had no intention of offending any one.—I remain, yours &c.,

F. W. HUTTON.

Dunedin, 10th August, 1874.

### ROMAN CONSPIRATORS IN BIRMINGHAM.—CONVERSION OF THE ENGLISH "POOR AND LOWLY" TO THE CATHOLIC FAITH.

OF all the dangerous Roman "Conspirators" in England at this moment, possibly the most dangerous are a certain body of religious men in the populous town of Birmingham. They are presided over by one who was himself once a Protestant, and the glory of the University of Oxford. I mean the "Oratorians," led by the celebrated John Henry Newman. The "Oratorians" profess to follow in the footsteps of St. Philip Neri, the founder of their Society. He lived in an age which in very many respects closely resembled our own. Christian faith and morality were suffering, and were in danger of being destroyed in Italy at that time, not through ignorance or barbarism, but from an excessive passion for art, science, secular learning, luxury and intellectual refinement. Moreover, something very like what we call "spirit-rapping," but which was then called "sorcery," had come into vogue among the people. Society was morally corrupt throughout, to an extreme degree; and most corrupt among the learned and refined. The corruption extended even to the clergy of the period. Happily, in our time, the clergy are faithful and pure. The poets, artists and philosophers who flourished in Italy, at that time, and their disciples, "flung a grace over sin, and a dignity over unbelief." A similar remark might not inaptly be applied to England at this moment. It was under such circumstances that St. Philip Neri made his appearance in Italy, and commenced his labors as a Reformer. He had been bred to the bar, but had left it to devote himself to a still nobler pursuit. How did he go about his business as a reformer and try to stem the tide of immorality, irreligion and rationalism, which was then running so strong? We are told "He began with the poor. Then he went among shopmen, warehousemen, clerks in banks, and loungers in public places. Encouraged by these successes, he addressed himself to men not merely careless, but of the worst kind of lives; and then also he gained for God. All this time he was visiting the hospitals, and attending to the necessities, both bodily and spiritual, of the sick." While so engaged, he was long a mere layman. He subsequently was ordained, and formed a religious society, the "Oratorians," which was of a somewhat peculiar kind. They had little or nothing to do with ecclesiastical matters or secular politics. They lived in obscurity, and laid special stress on prayer and meditation. They were simple in their forms of worship; and freely admitted laymen into their fellowship. Such are the "Oratorians" in Birmingham, over whom Dr. Newman has long presided. They are Roman "Conspirators" laboring to diffuse Catholic truth and to oppose the progress of irreligion, infidelity, and vice, among the laborious poor of Birmingham and its neighbourhood. God grant that in such a "conspiracy" they may succeed to their heart's content. They have a house in London too. "We have," says Dr. Newman, "not chosen any scene of exertion where we might make a noise. We have willingly taken that place of service which our superiors chose for us. The desire of our heart and our duty went together here. We have deliberately set ourselves down in a populous district, unknown to the great world, and have commenced as St. Philip our founder did, by ministering chiefly to the poor and lowly. We have gone where we could get no reward from society for our deeds; nor admiration from the acute and learned for our words. We have determined through God's mercy not to have the praise and the popularity which the world can give; but according to our founder Philip's precept "to love to be unknown." They are diligent followers of St. Philip, as St. Philip himself was a faithful follower of Christ—these Birmingham "Oratorians." When men like these are actuated by such a spirit as theirs, are mingling daily and familiarly with the poor and lowly of England, need we wonder that the Catholic religion is now making such rapid progress there. Once let the English Protestant masses, the lowly and laborious poor among them fairly understand what the Catholic religion is, then farewell English Protestantism. Dr. Newman and his "Oratorians" are just the men to instruct the English poor, and to undeceive them of those misconceptions about Catholicism which they sucked in with their mothers' milk, and which the Protestant pulpits have labored so successfully to confirm for the past three centuries. When Protestantism fairly gives way at home, it will not live long in the colonies, though it may live out our times.

Though the English Oratorians devote themselves principally and primarily to the instruction and care of the poor and lowly, their influence is powerful with the higher classes of religious Protestants also.