

THE Bank of New Zealand has declared a dividend of 12½ per cent per annum.

THE prospectus of the Imperial Building and Investment Society is to be found in our advertising columns. At a meeting of the shareholders of the Society, held at the offices of the Society, Exchange Chambers, Princes street, rules for the working of the Society were adopted, and other important business transacted. This Society is now fully embodied, and promises to be one of the sure and solid, if not of rapid growth.

It is rumoured that in the place of the abolished Mayor's Court, it is proposed to establish a Court of Petty Sessions in Dunedin, for the disposal of criminal cases, and that it is intended that Mr H. S. Fish, Jun., who has been permitted to retain his title of R.M., should be appointed Chairman of the same.

THE shareholders of the Dunedin Water Works Company, have, by a majority, resolved that in view of the general rise and increasing value of the Company's property, the sum formerly offered and recently renewed, by the Corporation, of £15 per share does not represent the fair value of the shares; and have empowered the directors to refer the question of actual price to the arbitration of arbitrators unconnected with the City or Province, and to be mutually chosen. The Corporation decline to proceed to arbitration.

As will be seen by a notice which appears in another column, the monthly meeting of the National Building Society for the receipt of subscriptions, &c., will be held at Mr C. R. Chapman's offices on Monday evening next, between 6 and 8 o'clock. We understand that the directors have appointed Mr J. B. McCulloch, the well-known and thoroughly competent accountant, of this city, to act as secretary, and that he will enter upon his duties in a few days. This will consequently be the last meeting of the Society which will be held at Mr Chapman's office. This Society intends immediately to establish agencies in all the country districts, to give persons in the country an opportunity of becoming members.

### FIRE IN DUNEDIN.

AT about two o'clock on Thursday morning, a fire broke out in George street, which destroyed the block of wooden buildings in which it originated, namely, the premises occupied by Messrs Schmidt, Durie, Jolly, Chiaroni, Wilson and Morrison, and G. I. Merrie. The amount of insurance on the block was, we believe, about £1500, which must be greatly below the value of the property destroyed. The buildings on the opposite side of the street, and the Royal George Hotel had a very narrow escape; at one time, we hear, the European Hotel was actually on fire, but a hose belonging to the premises soon extinguished the fire and kept the premises safe. Some of the shops adjoining the Hotel had the windows broken. There seems to have been a delay of ten minutes in ringing the fire-bell, and the firemen were not at all prompt in attending. Fortunately, however, the fire was confined to the one block of wooden buildings. A curious circumstance is that a little shop occupied by Mr Jolly, junr., around which the flames raged fiercely, was untouched by the fire.

### THE IMMIGRATION BREAK-DOWN.

THE 'North Otago Times' says:—"Railways without traffic, acres minus homes, wealth unequally distributed, taxation rendered heavy owing to an insufficiency of taxpayers—this is the inevitable prospect held out to the colonists should population cease to flow to our shores. This is the price we will pay for that party government which fills the Immigration Department with political nominees, whose sole qualification for the billet consists in their ability to receive the wages of corruption. The recent disgraceful reception of immigrants at Auckland, and the melancholy fact that both Canterbury and Otago are sending home agents of their own, are two damning proofs of the incompetency of both the London and Colonial Immigration Departments. We should not cast immigrants on our shores as if they were so much rubbish. By advice, and by paternal anticipation of the new comers' wants, we must prove to the newly-arrived colonist that he or she has not been persuaded to emigrate by false pretences. Nay, we would even suggest that a Court should be established for the purpose of dealing solely with complaints preferred by immigrants against the Government, and by the Government against the immigrants."

### THE 'TABLET' AND 'OTAGO TIMES'—A NEW ZEALAND CATHOLIC PARTY.

It is satisfactory to observe that the 'Otago Times' confirms the favorable opinion which Bishop Moran has expressed of the manner in which the N.Z. TABLET is conducted. The 'Times' seems rather surprised that the TABLET, being professedly a religious journal, should discuss the principles and conduct of its opponents in a spirit of moderation and courtesy. Religion in his mind, and in the mind of many others in this Protestant country, seems to be inseparably associated with ideas of intolerance, violence, and injustice—and no wonder. It is fortunate, therefore, that the TABLET is conducted in such a manner as to show that the Catholic religion, at least, is not necessarily allied to uncharitableness or rudeness, but the contrary. One fault the 'Times' thinks you have committed, and in his eyes it is a grievous one. You advocate the formation of a New Zealand Catholic party. If, indeed, the Catholic party you wish to see in existence and active operation were the unscrupulous, selfish, and greedy association which the 'Times' supposes it would be, then indeed you would be fairly open to the censure he has passed on you for your advocacy of such a party. But a Catholic party, if worthy of the name, must be and would be a party of justice—not of selfishness. It would claim nothing for Catholics which it would not readily concede to its fellow-citizens of other creeds. It would be well if the Protestant, and particularly the Presbyterian party in this colony were to treat their Catholic fellow-subjects on this principle. But the 'Otago Times' knows they do not; and were they to do so, it is even doubtful if they would meet with his approval. Without a Catholic party in the United Kingdom, does the 'Times' for one moment suppose that Catholic emancipation and the direct abolishment of the

Irish Church, or even aid to Catholic schools, under Mr Forster's Bill, would ever have been obtained. We are suffering a grievous wrong at present in this colony by the manner in which we are being taxed for educational purposes. Our bishops and clergy, backed by the TABLET, protest, but protest in vain, against this injustice. There is no organised Catholic party to give force to their remonstrances, and to stand by those at present few just and generous Protestants who advocate our cause. The time I suspect has not yet come for the formation of such a Catholic party here as it would be desirable to have, but things are visibly drifting in that direction, and the time cannot be far off when we shall see one in active operation in this colony. There are signs of Catholic lay organisation, unity, and zeal in every part of Christendom, and even in Auckland itself. Happily it is a zeal of the right sort—an enlightened zeal or enthusiasm, tempered with charity. The world has often seen a burning or furious Catholic zeal without charity, and its fruits have been the cause of much scandal and protracted injury to Christianity and liberty. The revival of such an evil spirit among Catholic people is never likely to take place. They are now well persuaded that they can only hope to be politically powerful in proportion as they are faithful to the duties their Church imposes upon them, and free from guilty ambition. Why is it that despots of all kinds—Catholic, or Protestant, or infidel—show such a sensitive dread of all Catholic associations existing for moral or religious, educational or charitable purposes? They dread their political power, and not without reason. The Catholic Church herself is a great political engine, and from her very nature cannot be otherwise. The Pope, her visible Head, bishops, priests, and lay associations, exercise a political power in influencing the destiny of nations, such as the fleets and armies and Cabinets of temporal princes do not and cannot possess. The Pope may smile at all the ironclads and improved modern instruments of war, in so far as they are designed to oppose his power. He virtually defies them all, supported as he is by the moral force of the millions of Catholic subjects over whom, in Christ's name, he rules. The present generation may not pass ere they see the formidable fleets and armies of England and France made indirectly subservient to the power of the Catholic Church, and the interests of the party.

Auckland.

J. Wood.

### MR. FOX ON MORMON MORALITY.

MORMONISM, remarks a Northern paper, has been preached in the House this session. We find Mr Fox, in 'Hansard,' approvingly quoting from Dr Lees the following words—"Even in distant Utah, as I saw, the poor ignorant Mormons, once the pariahs of Britain, born to conditions worse than their masters' horses, had, by means of the safeguard of prohibition, founded a colony and a city, conquered the obstacles of nature, made the wilderness blossom like the rose, and created a state of society which, for wealth, comfort, and morality, the absence of lunacy and pauperism, corruption and crime, shames the proudest capitals and cathedral cities of so-called Christendom, demonstrating that a true principle and law will effect more to further the genuine civilization of mankind, than all the moral and material appliances of Church and State when underlaid by the sensualising machinery of the liquor traffic." This is the first time any public man in any part of the British dominions has held up for imitation Mormon morality.

### NOMINATED FREE PASSAGES TO NEW ZEALAND.

('Mount Ida Chronicle.')

It is a noteworthy feature of the Order in Council referred to above that any Colonist can bring out any person who is willing to come—we presume a healthy adult—free of cost, by simply nominating him or her at the Government offices in New Zealand. This is a capital feature in the programme, for nothing can so conduce to the contentment of Colonists as having near their friends with whom they have been earlier in life associated.

### MR VOGEL'S INTENTION.

('Wakatip Mail.')

OUR contemporary, the 'Guardian,' has clearly pointed the finger at that which we hinted last week—viz., the cause of recent changes in the Cabinet. It boldly indicates Mr Vogel's assumption of the office of Minister for Immigration as a stepping-stone to the Agency-Generalship. We had no doubt of Mr Vogel's great desire to re-visit Europe as Premier. We have more than once said so, and what we now say is, that Mr Vogel is entitled to the position and the honor, be what it may. We would like to add that we consider all these things should be clearly done above-board, and without concealment of intentions.

### THE PERMISSIVE MEASURE.

THE 'Tuapeka Times' has "doubts as to the workableness of this measure. It would, we fear, subject the community to repeated disturbances which might not be advantageous to it as a whole." There would be ceaseless canvassing on the sides of advocates of the law and the publican, which would lead to "a kind of insidious bribery and corruption." It is of opinion that "decisive measures ought to be taken with sly groggeries."

The 'Nelson Examiner' on the same subject comes out very decided. The Permissive Bill, which became law under the name of the Licensing Bill, the 'Examiner' refers to as the bill "over which Mr Fox and some of the other 'intemperate' members of the Lower House made so much ado." The 'Examiner' adds—"It has since been described as a bill which will be found utterly inoperative. Most people will be disposed to add. So mote it be."

A slight incident at Munich has made a great impression. The Commander of the Army had given orders that the troops should not take part in the Corpus Christi procession unless the King himself were present. The King cancelled this order, and instead gave orders that the soldiers should go to the procession.