

great indebtedness of the country in the purchase of it would be increased at a future date, unless there was some provision made to prevent this. Borrowing money for the purchase of freehold property is just what many of the nominal holders of large estates would desire, so long as they got the price fixed by them for the same. As the taxation of the country is already extremely high, why increase it in such a manner? Indeed, it seems to be increasing to an alarming extent in every department of our Government. Look at our large army of Civil servants, permanent and temporary, which now number 4,400, or, according to the late census returns of our population, 1 to 131 of our present population. In comparing the number of hands employed in the Civil Service with the number of ploughmen engaged in cultivating the soil, I question very much if there are as many of the latter. Then, again, look at our large and ever-increasing educational vote of £361,936, and yet there are many thousands of children in this Colony, attending private schools, who receive no assistance from Government out of this large educational vote. In fact, every department of our Government is extremely expensive, as well as the Government itself, but colonists, as a rule, do not take the trouble to inquire about such matters, and consequently the real fault lies with themselves.

(To be Continued.)

## ASHBURTON.

(From our own Correspondent.)

THERE are many of your readers who have heard of Wakanui, and who, perhaps, are under the impression that it is an outlying district of little importance in the vicinity of Ashburton. It might, perhaps, astonish them to hear that it is an agricultural tract of country of wide expanse and second to none in the Colony as to productiveness. It is not very often that I can get out for a ride into the country, as you pay pretty dearly for a mode of conveyance here, and the go-roundabouts come in handy, especially when Tom, Dick, and Harry are to be attended to. This state of affairs makes you inclined to use Shank's mare, but then you cannot go far and what you see is hardly worth writing about. However, I indulged in the luxury lately, and during the course of my journey jotted down a few remarks which may interest some of your readers. I rode out along what is generally called the Beach road, and my horse and I being anxious to breathe the country air, I was soon away from the dust of our inland city.

The scene which presented itself to my view was a pleasing surprise. As far as the eye could stretch was a vast extent of land carefully cropped, and showing by the way in which it was laid down that the owners have a thorough knowledge of their business.

The crop land was interspersed with grassy paddocks on which were some of the best sheep I have seen in the Colony. There was also a good specimen of draught horses to be seen here and here, and a numerous sprinkling of pigs, which would cause you to think as you looked at the fences that it would be no wonder if somebody had the "wring soo" by the lug, sometimes. Further on I came in view of Mr. Liddy's farm, and by looking at it the spectator would have cause to think that wherever you place an Irishman, if you give him fair play, he will become one of the most persevering and energetic members of the community. I must say around Mr. Liddy's farm were strong indications of care and industry. Soon after this I came in view of Mr. Fitzgerald's farm, where well-gated paddocks and tidily trimmed fences were very conspicuous. I may here add that he is another Irishman, and worthy of note as a farmer. I then pursued my course in the direction of the Wakanui school, where the splendid house erected for the master caused me to think on the fate of the Catholic teacher, who as a rule has to pay for his house out of his slender salary, and yet at the same time there is no one more pure, more elevated, or more deserving of recognition, than one whose highest ambition is to store the minds of little children in the knowledge, and to guide their footsteps in the path of duty. Will the Government ever take into consideration the case of these men whose humble task involves all that is greatest in a State, and do justice to them and the Catholic body at large. I hope and trust it may. Having passed the Wakanui school I proceeded in the direction of the beach and soon came in view of the sea. As I gazed on its placid surface, and listened to the sound of its heaving motion as it rose and fell, like the breathing of some mighty giant in his sleep, Nature sent home a warning note to me in the feeling of a hungry pang, which made me think on the comforts of the tea-table and the chitter-chatter of the little ones, and suiting the very action to the thought, I was soon flying away in the direction of home. In passing my friend's place, Mr. Brankin, I felt inclined to trespass on his hospitality, but time would not permit of a delay. I was sorry that I was not in a position to call, as I was sure of getting a musical treat from his little daughter, who entertained me kindly on a previous occasion, and who can give "Home sweet Home," "The Harp of Tara's Hall," and "The Dear little Shamrock" with impressiveness and precision. I am sure, Mr. Editor, you quite understand how an Irishman feels when something prevents him from hearing these sweet melodies, which contain the music of his heart, and I must say I arrived in town again, if not in a more pleasant mood, still, a wiser man than when I left.

## H. A. C. B. S., DUNEDIN.

THE quarterly meeting of the St. Joseph's branch, Hibernian Society, was held in the Christian Brothers' schoolroom, Rattray street, Dunedin, on September 21. There was a good attendance of members, and a great amount of interest taken in the business transacted. It was decided to hold the annual *fête* this year as usual on Boxing Day, December 26. The takings for the evening in contributions from the members amounted to £37, and accounts to the amount of £29 were passed for payment.

C. O'DRISCOLL, Secretary.

## News in Brief.

LAST month's operations at Gympie, Queensland: 9192 tons for 7035oz. Dividends, £8130.

Several Russian war-ships are engaged in surveys on the coast of Corea.

The second ballots at the Communal elections in France have resulted in a net gain of eight seats to the Conservatives.

The Merrie Monarch, Charters Towers, Queensland, has been purchased by English capitalists for £75,000. Plenty of money in England for likely investments.

THE French Press in Egypt is endeavouring to excite the hostility of the low Greek population by a reference to the recent Greek blockade.

The unemployed on the forest plantation works at Rangariri are doing well. They have already planted 900 trees.

In a native quarrel in the Godavery district in Hindostan, 100 natives were killed.

Fourteen rebels in Madrid have been sentenced to death.

A colliery explosion has occurred at Silkstone, Yorkshire, whereby 20 persons lost their lives.

The French troops are still holding out at Mallicolo and Havannah Harbour. H.M.S. Swinger is watching their movements.

In all probability Sir Patrick Jennings will be made a baronet within the next few months.

The British-India Company are fitting all their ships with freezing chambers, and are about to prosecute the frozen meat traffic with great vigour.

The steamer Lyttelton bound from Ferntown to Wellington has been wrecked on a reef near the Beef Barrels. The crew were picked up and taken on to Nelson by the steamer Murray.

Lieutenant-colonel Stavely is gazetted honorary colonel on the Reserve list of the New Zealand Volunteer Force. Major Wales is promoted to be lieutenant colonel, and takes command of the Otago Militia and Volunteer district.

Government have received a cablegram from Admiral Tryon, suggesting that they should legislate in the direction of regulating the sale of intoxicating drinks to seamen belonging to her Majesty's war ships, while stationed in New Zealand waters.

The English harvest is almost completed. The wheat market is weak, and common sorts are 6d cheaper. Australian and New Zealand shipments are depressed.

Michael Davitt says: "The true policy for Home Rule is to advocate reforms required by the workers of Great Britain while advocating justice to Ireland."

Flower services were lately held at Ocean-street Congregational Church, Woollahra, Sydney. The flowers were afterwards taken to St. Vincent's Hospital, and presented to the Sisters of Charity.

A company is to be formed, to be known as the Australasian and Japanese Woollen Company, with a capital of £50,000.

The probable wheat yield in South Australia is estimated at about six bushels to the acre.

The Queensland Government intend to use steel sleepers on the railways which run through timberless country.

The striking of water on the Nallibor Plains, at the head of the Australian Bight, is hailed with joy by explorers and experts.

Nearly three million tons of coal (2,878,863) of the value of £1,340,212, were raised by 7097 men from 54 mines in New South Wales last year, the highest amount on record.

The estimated gold produce of New South Wales for the last 35 years was 9,639 359oz. of the value of £35 727,928.

The New Zealand Insurance and Finance Journal says that in five years, the export of bacon and hams has been multiplied by 65, that of butter by 12, of cheese by 17, of potted and preserved meats by 40.

A gang of raiders have shot two daughters of a farmer in Cork for refusing to give them arms which were in the farmhouse.

The last brick in the tunnels on the Wellington-Manawatu Company's line was placed on Monday.

Mr. Norton, of Sydney, in a letter to the Prince of Wales, asks him to exert his influence towards discouraging emigration to the Colonies.

A force of 15,000 troops despatched to quell the rebellion in Burmah has started for Rangoon.

In all there are 36,485 holdings in New Zealand, comprising upwards of 17,000,000 acres of land, of which 11,725,000 acres are freehold and 5,348,000 leasehold, exclusive of Crown pastoral leases.

The Minister of Mines has authorised that £760 be held at the disposal of Lake county towards making and continuing the Greestone route via Pyke's creek and Lake Alabaster.

A resident of Ballarat named W. H. Solomon has died from the effects of the bite of a cat received while playing with it.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* says that if the British evacuate Egypt it will be impossible to trust the French there, seeing how unreliable they have proved in the New Hebrides.

An Australian hall, built by Irish Catholics at a cost of £6000, has just been opened at Orange. It is the finest hall out of Sydney, having accommodation for 1000 people.

Edinburgh, Aug. 21.—In the new election just taken place in Leith to fill the vacancy caused by Gladstone's choosing to sit for Midlothian, which he was also elected to represent, Ferguson, the Gladstonian candidate, has been overwhelmingly successful. He polled 4,204 votes against 1,527 for MacGregor and 1,499 for Jacks. Both MacGregor and Jacks ran as Unionists. Jacks was returned as a Liberal to the last Parliament by a majority of 3,870 in a total vote of 8,840. He opposed Gladstone's Home Rule Bill, and entered the canvas for re-election as a Unionist.