

ACCORDING to the Wellington *Post* the Agricultural Department is continuing its efforts to eradicate phylloxera from the vineyards of the Colony. For a considerable time past two experts have been engaged in making a thorough examination of all the vineries in the northern part of this island, and another viticulturist (Mr. Harnitt) has made a start on similar work in the Wellington district. The Canterbury and Otago districts have already been inspected, and at an early date the Nelson and West Coast districts will be visited.

AN esteemed correspondent writes: On Tuesday afternoon, June 20th, the children of the Catholic School, Lae-ton, presented the Very Rev. Father Chervier, S.M., with a mantle drape on the occasion of the 42nd anniversary of his ordination. An entertainment, consisting of songs and recitations, was given by the children, a number of friends being present. At the conclusion Father Chervier thanked the children in a few well-chosen words, and acknowledged their good wishes by granting a holiday and promising an afternoon tea on a future occasion, when the days grew longer and warmer and the prevailing epidemic of measles had disappeared.

THE Californian thistle has proved itself a great pest in many parts of the Colony, and has been a great trouble to farmers. Mr. W. C. Buchanan, of the Wairarapa, was for some time greatly inconvenienced by the spread of the thistle, but has, by the adoption of very simple measures, quite eradicated it from his pastures. Several large property owners in the south are now taking similar means to clear their land of the pest. The plan is simply to prevent the formation of any leaves; and if this is done for two seasons the thistle will wither away. Mr. T. W. Kirk, the Government Biologist, at whose suggestion a number of farmers have taken the measures described, states that he has never heard of a failure in any case where his directions have been followed.

As I had occasion, writes a correspondent of the *Lyttelton Times*, to visit South Canterbury, I availed myself of the opportunity of having a look over the new settlement, the much-talked-of Waikahi Estate, and I do not think anything too much was said in its praise. I might mention that I have been all over New Zealand, and I feel sure that there are not 48,000 acres of as good land, all adjoining in the Colony. I think the Government has made a really good bargain, and that the land is worth from £2 to £3 per acre more than it paid for it. The settlers seem to be all of a most energetic type. In every paddock you will see teams of horses turning up the dark, loamy soil, and although it is scarcely two months since the ballot, you see numerous houses in course of erection, of a most substantial kind.

THERE are at present being landed at the Dunedin wharves several hundreds of tons of machinery, together with retorts and fireclay goods, for the New Zealand Collieries and Oil Syndicate in connection with their oil works at Orepuki, and other large shipments are to arrive. The work of opening up the shale deposits (says the *Otago Daily Times*) is being pushed on with spirit and energy. Some 800 square feet of bush land has been cleared, and the foundations for the stills and the large boilers are already in position. It is understood that the tests which have been made by the syndicate's experts of the oils procured from the deposit have more than realised anticipations, and thus the prospect of another industry of colonial importance springing up in Otago are of the most promising character. It is stated that the company hope to place their products, in the shape of paraffin, lubricating oils, wax, and sulphate of ammonia, upon the market at the beginning of the year.

THE Rt. Rev. Dr. Grimes, (says the *Kumara Times*, June 19,) preached his farewell mission sermon last evening in St. Patrick's Church, taking his text from part of the 10th verse of the 20th chapter of Revelation 'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life.' The sermon was listened to with marked attention by a very large congregation, the church being crowded to its utmost extent, forms having to be placed in the aisle to accommodate persons who could not obtain seats in the ordinary way. Before commencing his sermon the Bishop announced that the collection at Waimea and Stafford yesterday in aid of the cathedral fund amounted to £101 1s. His Lordship leaves Kumara to-morrow morning and will be driven by Father O'Hallahan in his two-horse buggy as far as the Bealey, Father Goggan remaining to finish the mission in South Westland. The collection now amounts to the respectable sum of close upon £500, and when the different places on the Christchurch road have been visited this amount will be considerably augmented.

A CORRESPONDENT sends us the following report of the visit of his Lordship Bishop Grimes to Ahaura. His Lordship, who was accompanied by Father Carew and Dean Martin, drove from Grey-mouth in a carriage and pair provided by the Rev. Father King, pastor of Ahaura. At Nelson Creek, a distance of ten miles from Ahaura, his Lordship was met by Father King and a large number of parishioners in vehicles and on horseback. After a brief greeting a procession was formed and moved on towards Ahaura. The Catholic Church there was suitably decorated for the occasion. Over the entrance gate, surrounded by ferns and greenery, were the words 'Welcome to our Bishop.' His Lordship was presented with an address, on behalf of the Catholics of the district, in which they thanked him for coming amongst them, and hoped his visit to the West Coast would give him much pleasure and be crowned with success. Dr. Grimes and Father Goggan gave a mission in Ahaura. The appeal of his Lordship on behalf of the Christchurch Cathedral was generously responded to.

The Queen's annual comings and goings to and from Scotland alone cost her close on £5000 a year.

THE TRANSVAAL.

THE CAUSE OF THE PRESENT TROUBLE.

Now that the Dreyfus case has been settled for a time the situation in the Transvaal is occupying a very prominent place in the cable news received in these colonies. A few particulars regarding the Transvaal and its quaint people (the Boers) may be of interest to readers of the N.Z. TABLET.

The historic life of the Transvaal may be said to have begun with the 'great Trek' or general exodus of the Cape Colony farmers of Dutch descent, who were dissatisfied with their treatment by the British authorities, and removed northwards in large numbers between the years 1833 and 1837. By 1836 some thousands had crossed the Orange river, and had reached a country which was then under the sway of a powerful refugee Zulu chief, named Mozeleketze. From this chief and his warriors the pioneers met with considerable opposition, but they eventually defeated him in a fierce engagement in 1837. Their next trouble was with the great Zulu chief Dingaan, who was then paramount in that part of South Africa now known as Natal. In their conflicts with this powerful ruler they met with several severe reverses, and would have been completely annihilated were it not for the bravery and generalship of Andries Pretorius, who eventually succeeded in defeating the Zulus. The republic of Natal was soon after proclaimed, but it had not a lengthened existence, as we find the British occupying this part of South Africa in 1843, and again the Boers found it necessary to make another move. This time they settled on what is now known as the Orange Free State. Here they remained practically undisturbed for some years, until, in consequence of further encroachments by British colonists, numbers of them made another 'trek' northwards, under the lead of Pretorius, and finally settled down in their present territory. In 1852 the British Government acknowledged their independence. During the following quarter of a century the Boers had the greatest difficulty in maintaining their position, being harassed on all sides by powerful native chiefs. In 1877 the British assumed the sovereignty of the South African Republic, for which the Boers were very thankful, as they had been exhausted by continuous wars with the natives. After a few years the Boers became dissatisfied with British rule, and in 1880 revolted, under the leadership of Paul Kruger, General Joubert being Military Commandant. Practically the whole male population of a fighting age, numbering about 12,000, took up arms, and in the war that ensued, inflicted several defeats on the British forces. Their success in this struggle was mainly due to their great bravery, military tactics, and especially their marksmanship. Their best known victory was that of the storming of Majuba Hill. The result of this war was that a treaty of peace was signed between them and the British Government in 1884. By this it was laid down that, although the Republic was to be independent with regard to its internal affairs, it should conclude no treaty or engagement with any state or nation, except the Orange Free State, nor with any native tribe lying to the east or west, without the approval of the British Government.

THE DISCOVERY OF GOLD.

About two years after this arrangement had been effected very valuable gold mines were discovered in the country. The discovery caused a rush to set in, at first from the neighbouring colonies, and after a time, it may be said, from all parts of the world. The Boers, who are a primitive and pastoral people, did not appreciate this addition to their population. Its composition was not such as would recommend it to the Puritanical, phlegmatic Boer, especially as the majority of the newcomers were British subjects. In fact, the new arrivals were regarded in much the same light by the Boers as were the pioneer diggers by the early settlers of Otago. Johannesburg became the centre of the operations, and in a few years this had risen from being a small village to the position of great commercial activity. In 1896 Johannesburg had a population of over 100,000, about half of which was white. In 1896 the white population of the Republic was estimated at 140,000, whilst the native element had been roughly set down at three-quarters of a million.

THE UITLANDERS' GRIEVANCES.

Matters went on smoothly enough after the discovery of gold, but in time the foreigners, or Uitlanders, who had become a power in the land, as far as numbers went, became dissatisfied with their position, for, whilst they were the largest contributors to the revenue, they were debarred from taking part in making the laws. The Boers, who had made great sacrifices to maintain their independence, declined to grant the franchise to the new colonists, as they knew that by doing so they would be simply transferring the ruling of the country to the Uitlanders. In 1895 a petition signed by over 50,000 Uitlanders was presented to the Volksraad, setting forth their grievances, and claiming an equitable franchise and fair representation for all residents in the Transvaal, with other administrative reforms. At that time the Uitlanders constituted the majority of the State, owning more than half the land and nine-tenths of the property, whilst at the same time in all matters affecting their lives, liberties and properties they had absolutely no voice. As the great bulk of the Uitlanders were British subjects it is unnecessary to point out that such a state of affairs was very galling to their feelings, especially as it was imposed by a people whom they regarded as an inferior race. On the other hand they had come into the Transvaal uninvited; they were unwelcome visitors, and if they chose to remain they were free to do so on the terms which the inhabitants of the country imposed. The Boers, rightly or wrongly, had no love for the British, whom they regarded as their oppressors in the past, and from whose rule they had voluntarily gone out, and against which they had later on revolted. The Boers had sacrificed everything for the sake of independence; they