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birds were caught. An old bird-catcher says that persons who intend to adopt Mr Wilder's method of destroying sparrows should select for the occasion a very dark night, also get several persons to beat with branches the bushes wherein the birds are roosting.

The local museum has been closed during the past week in order to make improvements in connection with several exhibits which have been hitherto almost concealed in the Moa room. The Canterbury Museum, it seems, is the only one in the Colony to form a collection of New Zealand relics which would prove of great interest now and in future, and the curator hopes that suitable donations of this class of specimens will be made. Among the items of this order already in the museum is the first stirrup iron used in the Chatham Islands. It was made about half a century ago, from the handle of a frying pan, by Mr F. Hunt, and presented by him to the Museum. There are a piece of copper and a nail from the wreck of the H.M.S. Orpheus, and from an old grave in Port Levy a brass plate, which bears a very unique inscription. A flint-lock musket, dating back to the beginning of the present century, and brought to Akarua by the French in 1839, also a flint-lock double-barrelled fowling piece which the Hon J. Bryce presented once to the Maori king, are to be seen. Then there are a fragment of ribbon and some plaited woman's tresses found with a male skeleton in a coffin, made, doubtless, a century ago, of European timber, and buried in the New Brighton sands. What tale do these and other interesting exhibits tell?

Mr R. Dobbin, president, presided at a fairly-attended meeting of the Catholic Literary Society on Tuesday evening last. The programme consisted of short addresses by members. The Rev Father Bell made an excellent speech on the labour question. Under the Southern Cross, he said, two thousand men and three hundred women, excited, yelling, cursing and calling for blood, and armed with sticks, stones, heavy bottles and revolvers are battering and crushing the windows of a passing train. The unarmed citizens in the train are trying to shelter themselves, and along with them are the constables, who, exercised in patience and heroic discipline, forbear to use their weapons. Then in Pittsburgh, in the land of freedom and under the Stars and Stripes, are thousands of men out on strike. On one occasion 270 armed detectives in a ship contend with 5000 men. The fight begins on shore. Had the petroleum oil, which was poured upon the water, taken fire, the Pinkerton men would have been roasted alive. They surrendered, and many were barbarously murdered. What is all this about? These crowds of men and women are solving the labour question. These events pass under our eyes, and, for the sake of humanity, is there no one to speak with authority on the momentous matter? He explained fully many important points discussed in the recent Papal Encyclical on Socialism and on the condition of labour. The Church had in the first thousand years of her existence emancipated the slaves, and emancipated woman and raised her to her proper dignity; and the Church alone could settle the labour question. Who but the immaculate spouse of Christ could inform mankind that they are the children of God?—Mr W. Holland followed with a short address on submarine navigation.—Mr R. O'Connor spoke ably on an often-asked question, "What are we to do with our boys?"—Mr J. J. Wilson's contention was, though the orator has great power, yet the Press influences the masses more than the platform.—Mr Dobbin gave an excellent lecture on earthquakes, and when the discourses were over they were criticised by Messrs Clarkson, Power, and others.

A representative of a local paper interviewed, on Thursday last, Mr E. J. Parker, one of the partners in a firm well known in Australia as large shipping owners. The object of Mr Parker's visit to this city, is to arrange the inauguration of a line of steamers—the first of which will make the trip early next month—between New Zealand and Australia. "We have built two steamers," he said, "the Warrimoo, and the Miowera, on the latest method, and fitted with all recent

improvements. The Warrimoo is 4000 tons burthen. She is 350 feet long over all, with 43 beam, and has a speed of 17 knots an hour. For the benefit of persons who suffer from sea-sickness, a rolling keel, which will make her perfectly steady in the heaviest sea, has been fixed on this vessel. She is water ballasted, and has a cellular bottom, and, therefore, is practically unsinkable. She will carry 200 saloon and 100 steerage passengers, and will have an unbroken promenade of 270 feet in length." Indeed, judging from Mr Parker's minute account of the nature and position of the saloon and a variety of other important matters, the vessel is really a grand and a unique structure. As to the fares, there will be a reduction. Messrs Kinsey and Co have been appointed agents for the new company in Canterbury, and the Warrimoo will make a special trip from New Zealand for the Melbourne Cup, and passengers will be able to live on board at hotel prices during the stay of the steamer.

Stormy weather set in again on Wednesday last, and cold showers have fallen at intervals. From a local paper it appears that severe weather has been experienced during the week at Ashburton and at Hokitika.

#### DUNEDIN CATHOLIC LITERARY SOCIETY.

THE usual weekly meeting of the above Society was held in the Christian Brothers' school on Wednesday, September 21. The chair was occupied by the president (Father Lynch).

Mr T. J. Collins read an essay on "Teeth," explaining their construction and giving advice for the prevention of decay. Human teeth, he said, are structures of long bony characters, and are divided into classes according to their functions and external configuration, but they have all certain characters in common. Every tooth consists of a crown, the portion of which appears above the gum, a root or roots imbedded in the jaw, and a neck, the portion which unites the crown and the root. The permanent set, 32 in number, is made up of four incisors formed for cutting, two canines for cutting and tearing, and four bicuspsids and six molars for grinding the food. Caries, or decay of teeth, is by far the most important of dental diseases. It is a malady universally spread, few individuals passing through life without an attack in one or more teeth. Caries is a process of disintegration, commencing invariably at the surface of the tooth, and proceeding inwardly, and due entirely to external agents. The onset of decay is favoured and its progress hastened by structural defects of common occurrence in the enamel and dentine, and the crowding and irregularity of the teeth, and by the derangements of the general health. It has long been established, Mr Collins said, beyond all doubt, that myriads of micro-organisms are constantly present in the human mouth, and that these, under favourable circumstances, are capable of manifesting an action of the utmost significance upon the local and general health. Not alone are they responsible for the vast majority of those diseases and contiguous parts which the dental surgeon is called upon to treat, but they also give rise to other local and general disorders of the most serious nature. These various disturbances are produced partly by the direct action of micro-organisms and their products upon the teeth and mucous membrane of the mouth, partly by swallowing large masses of bacteria, partly by carrying them into the lungs and obtaining an entrance into the blood. The existence of a most excellent nursery for bacteria at the very portal of the human body is a fact which has only recently begun to receive the attention which its importance demands. The active agents in the decay of teeth, he asserted, are acids and micro-organisms. The acids are mainly the products of putrefaction and fermentation set up in fragments of food, mucous, etc, which are constantly present in the mouth. Crowding and irregularity of the teeth, due to smallness and malformation of the bones, form a predisposing form of decay. Whilst it is exceptional