

NEW ZEALAND RAILWAYS

OAMARU RACES.
20th and 21st OCTOBER

HOLIDAY EXCURSION TICKETS to Oamaru will be issued at Dunedin, Timaru, and Intermediate stations, including branches, on 19th and 20th October, also by morning trains on 21st October, available for return up to and including Wednesday, 26th October

The return fare will be :-2d per mile first-class and 1d per mile second class, minimum 4s and 2s respectively.

THURSDAY and FRIDAY, 20th and 31st OCTOBER.

The 7.42 a.m. train from Dunedin will leave Sawyers Bay at 8.7 a.m., Purakanui 8.40 a.m., Waibati 9.0 a.m., Seacliff 9.30 a.m., Waikouaiti 9.55 a.m., Palmerston 10.30 a.m., Hampden 11.15 a.m., Herbert 11.40 a.m., Maheno 11.55 a.m., arriving Oamaru 12.30 p.m.

By Order.

IN MEMORIAM

ROSSITER—In loving memory of Eliza Rossiter, who died at Christchurch, New Zealand, 30th September 1900, aged 67 years.

Sleep on beloved, sleep and take thy rest,
Lay down thy head upon thy Saviour's breast,
We love thee well, but Jesus loves thee best,
Good night!

Calm is thy slumber as in infants' sleep,
But thou shalt wake no more to toil and weep,
Thine is a perfect rest, secure and deep—
Good night! Good night! Good night!

—Inserted by her loving husband, sons, and daughters



To promote the cause of Religion and Justice by the ways of Truth and Peace.

LEO. XIII. to the N.Z. TABLET

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1904

LABOR DAY



THE old Spanish social distinction between the 'caballero' (the man on horseback) and the 'peon' (the man on foot) runs in one shape or other through the history of most peoples. It is one of the rags and tatters that have clung to us from the troubled times when every able-bodied tradesman was a warrior, and fighting was nearly as much a part of the game of life as eating and sleeping. And yet the man with the hoe and the man with the hammer have done more for the material well-being of our race, more to build up and enrich nations, than all the legions of men on horseback that have ever carved each other up upon the world's battlefields. This is one of the obvious reminders of Labor Day. The worker is the bone and sinew of the community. 'Honest labor bears a lovely face,' says Dekker. But it bore the brand of slavery and serfdom till the Catholic Church emancipated it. Even in the early days of persecution, when people worshipped in secret in the catacombs the slave and the master knelt side by side before the altar, equal in the sight of God and His Church, as employer and employee do in our day. Down all the ringing grooves of centuries of change the Church has preserved the honor and protected the interests of honest labor. She has taken her stand by its side, and the olden bond between her and the toiling masses shall never be broken.

The Catholic guilds of the middle ages were, perhaps, the best protective institutions ever formed for the benefit of labor. Under them the artisan had his eight-hours' day. He had, for his time, high wages. He was protected by his guild against arbitrary dismissal; he was insured against the ordinary accidents of life; he was buoyed up by the reasonable hope of one day becoming himself an employer. He was secure on his Sunday rest, on his Saturday half-holiday, of his Christmas and Easter holidays, and of many other festivals scattered throughout the year, and the low fixed rents of the time contributed greatly to his prosperity. The generation that preceded the Reformation was, in England and Germany, the golden age of labor. The old Catholic guilds were overthrown in those countries during the great religious revolution of the sixteenth century. Then began the long period of moral and physical degradation of the workers, who have only during the past two generations slowly and painfully succeeded, by the establishment of trade unions, in winning back some of the rights and privileges of the days of the guilds. 'At the time of the Reformation,' says a Protestant authority, 'these guilds were abolished in Protestant countries, under pretence of their being superstitious foundations. In Denmark and North Germany their property was devoted to public service, but in England it was handed over to the King and his courtiers. Their guild-houses became poor-houses and their pageants were laid aside.' 'Their property,' says Professor Thorold Rogers in his 'Six Centuries of Work and Wages,' 'was finally confiscated by 1 Edward VI., cap. 24, after having been comprised in the last of Henry's acts of rapine (37 Henry VIII., cap. 1) . . . When the guild lands and charity lands were confiscated at the beginning of Edward's reign a promise was made that the estates of these foundations should be devoted to good and proper use, by erecting grammar schools, schools for the better augmentation of the University, and the better provision for the poor and needy. They were swept into the hands of Seymour, Somerset, of the Dudleys and Cecils, and the rest of the crew who surrounded the throne of Edward VI.' Slavery was then re-established, savage laws were framed to perpetuate the bondage of labor, and the worker sank into a social and political hell of the damned.

The middle age in England, Germany, and Denmark had its many drawbacks its great and petty tyrannies, its manifold discontents and harshships. 'But, on the whole,' says Professor Thorold Rogers, 'there were none of those extremes of poverty and wealth which have excited the astonishment of philanthropists, and are now exciting the indignation of workmen. The age, it is true, had its discontents, and these discontents were expressed forcibly and in a startling manner. But of poverty which perishes unheeded, of a willingness to do honest work and a lack of opportunity there was little or none.' It should have a sobering effect to recall all this in view of the unemployed difficulty that has suddenly sprung upon us in some of the provincial capitals on this year's Labor Day. We in this favored land stand in the van of enlightened factory and general labor legislation. But let us be just to the medieval pioneers that showed us the way. Our annual October labor festival is not the celebration of the conquest of a new right, the capture of a fresh height, by the working man. It is merely the re-conquest of rights which were recognised as a matter of course all over Catholic Europe as far back as four centuries ago, but which was trampled into the dust in the storm and fury of the Reformation. Moreover, our legislation, progressive though it be, is necessarily limited, negative, and protective in its nature. It does not restore to the world of labor its lost Atlantis—it does not secure constant employment or the certainty of a reasonable wage. Much less can it re-