

A contingent of the Dunedin branch of the Hibernian Society, consisting of 43 members, paid a friendly visit to their brethren of the Milton branch on Saturday afternoon, January 27. A start was made at three o'clock from the Custom House Square in three drags supplied by Messrs. Sheehy and Kelleher, of the Rink Stables. The party arrived in Milton—a distance of 36 miles—about nine o'clock. The visitors were met some miles outside the town by a number of the local members, and after reaching Milton were escorted to the branch room, where a splendid repast was partaken of, Bro. J. P. Lynch, of the Milton branch, occupying the chair. 'His Holiness the Pope' was proposed by the chairman and responded to by the Very Rev. Father O'Neill, who in an eloquent speech explained the great pleasure it gave his Holiness to see Catholic young men joining Catholic societies. Father O'Neill also extended a hearty *cead mile failte* to the visitors, and said he would do all he could to advance the cause of Hibernianism in Milton. The toast of the 'Visitors' was proposed by Bro. Lynch and responded to by Bros. McDermott, O'Connor, and Marlow; and the 'Milton Branch,' proposed by Bro. Hally and responded to by Bros. Ducey, Horan, and Lynch. The visiting and local members in regalia, and headed by the banner of the Dunedin branch, met at the branch room—at half-past ten on Sunday morning and marched in procession from there to the Very Rev. Father O'Neill's residence, thence to the church to attend the eleven o'clock Mass. The procession was a long and imposing one, and will not be forgotten in Milton for some time. At three o'clock a start was made for the return journey, and, after cheers and counter cheers were given, the visitors bade good-bye to Milton for the present, all expressing satisfaction at the hospitable manner in which they were received and entertained by the members of the Milton branch.

WANGANUI

(From an occasional correspondent.)

February 5.

The schools re-open to-day. Brother Virginius has taken Brother Patrick's place in the Marist Brothers' schools.

As the priests of the parish are going on their retreat next Wednesday Rev. Father O'Dwyer will act in their absence.

Last Wednesday the members of St. Mary's choir met at Very Rev. Dean Grogan's invitation to make a presentation of a silver-mounted walking-stick and a silver matchbox to Mr. E. Reade, one of the members, who is leaving the district. In making the presentation Dean Grogan referred to Mr. Reade's services to the choir.

NEW ZEALAND: GENERAL

In an appeal case in Christchurch Mr. Justice Deniston held that milk to which a quantity of water had been added could not be described as 'pure' milk.

The members of the Dunedin branch of the Hibernian Society, on their return journey from Milton on Sunday week, witnessed an exhibition of perseverance on the part of a weasel that would scarcely be appreciated by the owner of the article it was purloining. The little animal (writes a correspondent) was quite close to a farm house and was endeavoring to carry an egg up an incline. It held the egg between its snout and fore legs and then would advance by jumping on its hind legs, but apparently got tired, for the egg dropped and rolled down the hill again until intercepted by the weasel. This process of dropping and intercepting the egg continued for about fifteen minutes until at length it succeeded in getting its booty under the cover of a gorse bush and out of sight.

The estimate of the population of the Colony on December 31 last is 937,892, comprising 496,853 males and 441,039 females. These figures, however, include a Maori population set down at 43,143, together with 12,292 inhabitants of the Cook and other Pacific Islands. The estimated population within our own shores (excluding Maoris) was therefore 882,457 on the date mentioned—an increase of 24,918 in the twelve months. This increase was made up by an excess of births over deaths amounting to 15,616, and an excess of arrivals over departures to the extent of 9302. The birthrate for the Colony in 1905 was 27.21 per 1000 of mean population (the highest on record), and the death rate 9.26. The number of marriages (excluding those contracted between Maoris) solemnised in 1905 is estimated at 7234 or 8.31 per 1000 of the mean population—a record.

It is estimated by the Registrar-general that there are 2847 Chinese in the Colony, of whom 50 are females.

Sir Joseph Ward was entertained at a banquet at Winton on Thursday evening, and at the same time was presented with a sword by the Winton Rifles, of which he is honorary captain.

Mr. John J. Daly, of Christchurch, in a letter to the 'North Otago Times,' adds his testimony to that of Messrs. Anderson and Hedley, to the efficacy of the rain rotting method of exterminating Californian thistle. Mr. Daly states that about 1892 he had a full crop of Californian thistles on a farm of 60 acres in the Ashburton district. With a garden hoe he cut them down when in bloom, just below the ground; the root stems were hollow and caught some rain and the water rotted out every root. He advises that stock should be kept off the ground after cutting the thistles, or they will tread soil into the root tubes and choke them from receiving rain water. The 'North Otago Times' states that it is informed that this root-rotting process is precisely that which is adopted in Canada, and our contemporary wants to know why the Agricultural Department are not aware of that fact.

The inquiry into the management of the Waltham Orphanage was concluded on Tuesday. At the close of the evidence the Commissioner (Mr. H. W. Bishop, S.M.) said there was nothing at the orphanage likely to be of use in training the girls for domestic work. The appointments were of the poorest description, and the crockery was of a very haphazard character. Hardly two cups were alike, or two dishes. He was not speaking in disparagement of Mrs. Carpenter. The excuse she gave was that there were so many breakages that it was not worth while getting anything decent. However, the little refinements of life did not cost much, and were very acceptable. He expressed his pleasure at the admirable spirit which had characterised the inquiry. Throughout the whole long, and to some, wearisome, inquiry, there had not been the least friction. His duty now would be to present his report, and he was not looking forward to that with any great pleasure, as whatever the recommendations he made they were likely to be assailed on all sides. However, he had no intention of trying to please everybody. He had strong views in regard to certain matters, and should have no hesitation in expressing them.

'All Hallows Annual,' the magazine issued by the celebrated Irish missionary college, contains within its 170 odd pages a great deal of matter which will be found not only of interest to former students but also to the general public. There is a special memoir of the late Mr. Henry Bedford, M.A., who had been actively engaged for well nigh half a century in the work of the college, during the greater part of which time he was a prominent figure in Catholic literary, scientific, and social circles. Mr. Bedford was an Anglican clergyman, and in 1851 was received into the Church, the same year which saw the conversion of the late Sir Vere de Vere, Lady de Vere, and Mr. Aubrey de Vere. In 1852, at the invitation of the late Bishop Moriarty, Mr. Bedford became connected with All Hallows, and then until his death last year he lived his long life of active effective work as professor of natural sciences, treasurer, and one of the college directors. Under the heading 'Mission Field,' we have items from various parts of the world, whilst in 'A Satchel of Letters' are extracts from the correspondence of former students now laboring in many climes. The record of the work of the college during the year occupies considerable space, and in 'The Memory of the Dead' we have an account of those who passed away during the previous twelve months. The annual both from an artistic and literary standpoint is highly creditable to the great missionary college from which it emanates.

The annual report of the Wellington Chamber of Commerce states that the value of the exports for the year has reached a total substantially in excess of any previous year's, the result being entirely due to the increased price of wool. In wool alone there is an augmentation of £1,210,711. There is also a slight increase in sheepskins, dairy produce, hemp, and timber, while each of the other lines shows a measure of falling off. The value of the wool exported totalled £5,542,182, against £4,331,471 in 1904; frozen meat was £2,749,285, as against £2,798,965 in 1904; gold, £2,085,291, as against £2,052,059 in 1904; kauri gum, £508,091, as against £542,321 in 1904; hemp, £728,585, as against £706,012; timber, £310,206, as against £246,763. The total value of the exports during the past twelve months amounted to £15,674,136, as against £14,581,436 in 1904. The following are the quantities of the more important products:—Wool, 146,889,767 pounds; frozen meat, 1,729,307cwt; butter, 318,497cwt; cheese, 79,296cwt; tallow, 15,944cwt; kauri gum, 10,080

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