

NEW ZEALAND: GENERAL

The sum of £993 was received by the Government during the year 1905 under the Cyanide Process Gold Extraction Act.

It is stated on good authority (says the Wellington correspondent of the 'Otago Daily Times') that the value of the property which passed under the will of the late Premier will be between £8000 and £10,000.

A colonist who arrived in Wellington in 1831, Mr. William Reeve, has just celebrated his ninety-sixth birthday. Mr. Reeve went through some rough whaling experiences at the Chathams and in the waters about Wellington.

Sir J. G. Ward inspected the large new refrigerating produce sheds in Manchester, and embarked there last week for America, being accompanied down the canal by the Lord Mayor and Corporation, and a number of the directors of import and export companies. The canal company gave a luncheon in honor of the Minister.

A petition is in circulation in Marlborough praying the Government to acquire, under the Land for Settlements Act, the Hillersden estate, Wairau Valley. The estate has an area of 120,000 acres, 40,000 of which are freehold, and the remainder Crown land. The petition states that the estate is held by trustees, there being no heir to it.

Sir Joseph Ward apparently heard of Mr. Guinness's election as Speaker while crossing the Atlantic, en route for America, for he sent his congratulations from the Atlantic Ocean by wireless telegraphy. The message was taken up by the Crookhaven Wireless Station in Ireland (writes the Wellington correspondent of the 'Otago Daily Times'), and from there cabled to New Zealand a unique and up-to-date message of congratulations.

Sergeant Baskville, of the police force, who has arrived in Dunedin, was entertained at a smoke concert prior to his departure from Waipukurau, and was presented on behalf of numerous subscribers with a handsome gold watch and chain for Mrs. Baskville. Mrs. Baskville was entertained by the ladies of the township at afternoon tea and presented with a silver egg stand and silver bread platter, while from the members of the Catholic Church she received a silver teapot, sugar basin, and cream jug.

The revenue account of the accident branch of the Government Insurance Department for the year 1905 shows that £23,970 was received in premiums and £905 in interest. On the expenditure side claims amounted to £11,242 and commission to £3295, salaries to £2866, management expenses £838, land and income tax £611, and appropriation to reserve £80. The amount of the accident funds at the 31st of December last was £12,186, as against £5695 at the end of the previous year. The total of the unearned premiums reserve fund is £9588.

From January 1, 1902, to December 31, 1904, 47 undesirable immigrants were refused admission into New Zealand. Of these 40 were refused admission because they failed to pass the education test, three because they were consumptives, and four on the ground of insanity. Of the total number 33 came from New South Wales, included in this list being a batch of 20 Austrians. Seven Englishmen were refused admission. Three of them, who came from London, were consumptives, and three, who came from New South Wales, were insane. The seventh, who came from London, was refused on the ground of insanity.

A summary of rough results of the census has now been prepared, which shows a total population amounting to 890,415 persons on the 29th of April last, as against 772,719 persons on the 31st of March, 1901. The numerical increase is thus roughly ascertained to be 117,696 persons, or 15.23 per cent. for a period of five years and one month, as against an increase of 69,359 persons for the period 1896 to 1901, or at the rate of 9.86 per cent. The estimated population for the 31st March last, arrived at by adding the natural increase (births over deaths) and the excess of arrivals over departures to the census figures of 1901, gave a total population of 889,900 persons, so that the census of the 29th April, 1906, may be said to justify the estimate very completely, and the estimate has confirmed the results of the census. There will be the final corrections to make; the Maori population to add (43,143 persons in 1901); and the results of the Cook and other annexed Pacific Islands (12,292 persons in 1901). Altogether a total population for the Colony of at least 946,000 persons may be anticipated.

Oamaru and Invercargill came under No-license on Saturday night.

Among the new meteorological instruments that have been supplied to the Rev. D. C. Bates, is a pluviometer, which registers not only the amount of rainfall, but the duration of the showers,—a most important point, says the weather recorder. During his recent visit through the North Island he placed new thermometers and other instruments at stations where they were needed. He declares that the finest meteorological observatory in New Zealand belongs to the Rev. Dr. Kennedy, of Mceance, near Napier. Dr. Kennedy is also importing one of the best telescopes ever despatched to the Colony.

In the course of his sermon at the 11 o'clock Mass at St. Francis' Church, Thames, a few Sundays ago, the Right Rev. Mgr. O'Reilly paid a tribute of respect to the memory of our late Premier. Mr. Seddon's life (said Monsignor O'Reilly) was a noble and unselfish one, always doing what he could for suffering humanity. It was he who granted the old age pension, in fact he was always trying to relieve the destitute. Though not a member of our creed, he was in sympathy with our schools and said to me personally on one occasion that if he could see his way clear he would grant Government aid to them. The Colony will miss him for many years to come.

A list of the nationalities of the members of the new Parliament, which has been compiled by Mr. Lawry, shows that out of a House of 80 members there are 33 colonials, 23 Englishmen, 13 Scotchmen, 10 Irishmen, and one Welshman. The large proportion of colonials is hailed as a hopeful sign by the advocates of the formation of a Young New Zealand party. Our readers will remember that after the general election we published a list giving the birthplaces of the members of the House of Representatives, which differs somewhat from Mr. Lawry's, as he uses a different classification.

The annual return of the Post Office Savings Bank, presented to the House of Representatives, shows that during the year 1905 the number of new accounts opened totalled 60,015, the number closed being 42,113. The number of accounts open at the end of the year was 276,066, the total amount standing to the credit of the accounts being £8,662,022, as against £7,761,382 at the close of the previous year. The deposits during the year amounted to £6,625,744, and the withdrawals to £5,984,185, thus leaving a balance of deposits to the extent of £641,559. The excess of the deposits in 1904 was only £171,769. The interest paid last year was £259,081, as against £200,930 in 1904.

At the general meeting of the Bank of New Zealand last week, Mr. Malet, who presided, said last year the capital stood at £1,952,370. To-day it is represented by two millions. The difference represents the amount of capital restored by the sale of the balance of forfeited shares, and the payment of arrears of calls. The paid-up capital of shareholders was now half a million. All outstanding calls had been paid in full. The reserve fund had been increased by £37,397 from premiums on the sale of forfeited shares, and stands at £81,294. The profit and loss account shows a profit of £274,329, against £253,930 last year. The Bank's progress during the past five years is indicated as follows:—1902, £172,501; 1903, £195,590; 1904, £200,303; 1905, £253,930; 1906, £274,329. Investments in the Colony had increased by £51,756.

The first session of the sixteenth Parliament of New Zealand was opened by Commission on Wednesday afternoon of last week. After the swearing in of members and election of Speaker both Houses adjourned until the following day, when his Excellency the Governor delivered probably the briefest speech on record in New Zealand on such an occasion. In both Houses resolutions were passed expressing regret at the death of the late Right Hon. R. J. Seddon, recognising the great services he had rendered to the Colony and Empire, and expressing the deepest sympathy with the bereaved family. A somewhat similar resolution was also passed respecting the deaths of the Hon. C. W. A. T. Kenny and D. Pinckerton and Mr. Job Vile. On Friday the Address-in-Reply was adopted in both Houses, and the Public Revenues Act Amendment Bill was put through all stages and signed by the Governor. The Council adjourned indefinitely, and the House of Representatives till Wednesday, when Parliament was prorogued.

Samples of wine sold as Australian in England have been found by the Victorian Government Analyst not to be the wine sent from Australia, but an inferior blend of Australian and other wines.