

Interprovincial

The Hon. Thomas Mackenzie has taken the position of Minister of Agriculture, and Sir Joseph Ward retains the portfolio of Lands.

Messrs. Findlay Bros., of Oreti, are reported to have threshed one paddock of oats which realised 126 bushels to the acre (says the *Tapanui Courier*).

His Majesty the King has been pleased to direct that the Hon. J. McGowan, who has served for more than three years as a member of the Executive Council of the Dominion of New Zealand, shall retain permanently the title of 'Honorable.'

It is stated that from 20 to 30 families are emigrating to Nelson from Wellington (says the *Nelson Mail*). The heads of these are mostly retrenched officers, who lived in Wellington on salaries of from £500 to £600 per annum, but whose retiring allowance, £250, will not allow them to continue in Wellington.

'There are women doing things that you or I would not do for £5000 a year,' said Dr. Mason, in eulogising the female nurses at the Nelson Hospital and Charitable Aid Board meeting. It was, he said, the innate gentleness of women that made them more satisfactory nurses than men. In spite of what one or two members of the board remarked, he said if he were ill he would prefer a female nurse.

A correspondent points out that on the electoral roll for 1874-75 there were only seven qualified electors at Cheviot, the names being Joseph Barlow, William Horne, George McMillan, William Robinson, Thomas Robson, John Sinclair, and William Stearn, and the qualification for three of these was 'four-roomed house,' 'three-roomed house,' or a 'two-roomed house.'

The Prime Minister states (according to the *Dominion*) that there is no intention of calling Parliament together earlier than usual. Previous sessions had begun on June 23, June 25, June 28, and other dates in that neighborhood, and he knew of no special reason for a departure from the custom. The exact date for the opening of the coming season was not yet fixed.

The total estimated population of New Zealand (including the Cook Group and outlying islands) on March 31 was 1,028,384. Of this number the Maori population is set down as 47,731, and that of the Cook Group and other islands at 12,340, so that, excluding population under those heads, the white population of New Zealand is 968,313. The net increase for the March quarter was 4223 males and 3448 females, making a total of 7671.

Mr. Barber, ex-M.P. for Newtown, stated at the Timber Commission's Auckland sitting that houses could be built in Wellington of concrete almost as cheaply as of wood. A witness doubted the assertion, whereupon Mr. Barber said that the Government architect, who was his authority, had declared that a four-roomed cottage built of concrete cost only £6 more for material than if it had been built of wood.

Referring to a statement which has been published in Wellington to the effect that his Excellency the Governor, Lord Plunket, is likely to leave the Dominion in February next, the representative of the *Otago Daily Times* says that, as a matter of fact, Lord Plunket's term of office (six years) does not expire until June 20, 1910. Whether or not he will leave before that date is not officially known.

The Prime Minister told a representative of the *New Zealand Times* on Tuesday that the Government had already saved £187,000 per annum in the remodelling of the public service. This was not in salaries alone, money having been saved in other directions than by the retirement of officers. A further series of rearrangements was announced by Sir Joseph.

The *Wellington Post*, in the course of an article on death duties, says: 'How far the dispersion of large properties will be aided by giving effect to the Premier's suggestion we cannot pretend to say, but the revenue should certainly profit, and it may also be that testators will be stimulated to greater generosity to public and charitable objects on their own account, instead of leaving these matters for vicarious settlement by a duty free and verbally enjoined widow.'

The Otago Hospital and Charitable Aid Board has secured a site of 80 acres two miles south of Palmerston South for a consumption sanatorium. The cost of the land is about £1000, and there are buildings on the ground which will fit into the plans of complete premises. Sufficient ac-

commodation will be provided to answer Southland requirements, as well as those of Otago. It is also intended to provide for paying patients, with separate accommodation. It is hoped to make the institution self-supporting from revenue-paying patients, keeping cows, etc.

In the course of his lecture at the Otago University on Thursday night (says the *Otago Daily Times*), Professor Black made reference to one curious and little-known effect of the introduction of coal gas to houses. A century or so ago, he said, bismuth was largely used by ladies in the preparation of cosmetics for beautifying their faces, but just about the time coal gas came in the practice suddenly stopped. Coal gas contained another kind of gas which had the effect, as he showed by experiment, of turning bismuth to a dark reddish brown. 'Now you will understand,' he said, 'why the ladies gave up the practice.'

In responding to a toast at the banquet to the Hon. A. T. Ngata, at Kaiapoi on Saturday night, a speaker said the framework of the proposal to give Maoris representation in Parliament was first laid before the Natives at Kaiapoi, and the letters of Mr. J. E. FitzGerald, which brought the representation forward, were translated into the Native language. It was always Mr. FitzGerald's idea that the Native race should have every opportunity and encouragement to become at least the equals of the pakeha in the crafts, arts, and sciences. Though this had been tardy in operation, the speaker hoped the Young Maori Party would witness advancement with the assistance of the guest of the evening.

At the Invercargill Police Court last week a case of interest to motorists was decided. This was an information by T. A. Piper (District Traffic Manager) against E. Brown (Gore), in which defendant was charged with carrying a tin of petrol in a passenger carriage on the railways contrary to regulations. Mr. W. Macalister appeared for the department, and stated that it was contrary to the regulations to carry explosive substances in the carriages. The department wished the public to know that this was an offence, as it was not only a nuisance, but dangerous. In this case defendant had a motor bicycle, and he put this in the van and emptied the oil from the tank into a small can, which he put in a first class non-smoker carriage, while he himself went into a smoker. Brown admitted the offence at once when asked about it, but stated he did not know it was an offence. Defendant stated that he acted in ignorance of the regulations. In order to avoid any possibility of the spirit being exploded by combustion he placed the can in a non-smoker instead of taking it into a smoking carriage. Defendant was convicted and ordered to pay costs (witnesses' expenses and solicitor's fee) amounting to £3.

The Government meteorological observer gave a *Wellington Post* reporter the other day some interesting information regarding those playful atmospheric disturbances called cyclones. A cyclone (he explained) is commonly understood to be a violent whirling wind, but in meteorology the term is applied to a low-pressure movement advancing like a great top spinning from left to right in the direction traced by the hands of a watch. An anti-cyclone is a high-pressure movement in which the whirl is from right to left. Thus, if a cyclone has its centre in Cook Strait, the result will be a westerly wind at Auckland, a northerly on the east coast, southerly on the west, and easterly at the Bluff. An anti-cyclone similarly centred reverses the dispensation, giving an easterly to Auckland and a westerly to the Bluff. One has only to watch the face of a watch to follow the range of the wind. Most of the North Island bad weather is brought by cyclones and monsoonal depressions, chiefly cyclones, and much of the South Island's share of disagreeableness is due to westerly waves of low pressure. The low-pressure cyclones are responsible for the numerous northerlies and the not infrequent south-easters that sweep Wellington. Cook Strait is on the boundary line of both systems, and therefore the capital may get a taste of each disturbance. The high-pressure anti-cyclones generally bring bright days, and the life of this friend is generally from seven to nine days; but it may be rudely ousted by an enemy after a reign of only one day. Per electric cable the low-pressure waves from the west give notice of motion. When Perth announces that it has been visited by a low-pressure, Hobart may expect a call three days later, and the Bluff may be reached in another three days. The gap between Perth and the Bluff is generally covered in five to seven days. The average is six days. However, the undesirable immigrant may be diverted—it may die away or be delayed. The cyclones manage to get a tyrannical sway for a time, but the ruling force is the anti-cyclone for ever. The high pressure is in conflict with the low, and the high pressure wins eventually by superior size and strength. It is a beautiful game of balancing, and man, taking the year through, gets the balance in his favor.