

strides in every path of religious progress. The diocese at present has a Catholic population of 50,000. The See erected at Arichat, in 1844, was subsequently translated to Antigoneth. Here the Catholics are more numerous than in the parent diocese, numbering 73,000. There are three other suffragan dioceses, embracing the whole territories of Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, and having an aggregate population of 180,000.

## NOTES FROM THE HOUSE.

### PROCEEDINGS IN PARLIAMENT.

(From our special correspondent.)

The whole of the sitting on Monday was taken up with the debate on the Public Works Estimates. Several of the members complained of the meagre sums set aside for their respective districts. The Premier deprecated the cry for more money which had been heard from all over the Colony. It was impossible, he said, that the country could go on at the rate some members wished. The appropriations for public works this year amounted to fourteen hundred thousand, but next year, owing to the reduction in the tariff, there would be a smaller sum available to meet the demands made, and a loan of two millions would be needed. Personally, he would sooner leave the Treasury benches than land the Colony in any such policy. The House could do so, but he would be no party to it. He hoped the House would not force on the Government a policy of heavy borrowing that had proved so disastrous in the past, and he asked the Press of the Colony to sustain him in that decision. The Estimates were larger than he approved of, and therefore he could hold out no hope that further provision would be made in the Supplementary Estimates. They were on safe lines at present, and should leave it at that.

On Tuesday the principal business transacted in the House was the consideration of the Public Works Estimates. In reply to an objection urged against the importation of rolling stock the Minister for Railways said that 1000 waggons were being ordered from England. They were to be landed in the Colony by the 1st January. The 63 railway carriages were being manufactured in America. He was opposed to the importation of rolling stock, but in this case it was inevitable. The imported rolling stock would not be cheaper than that manufactured in the Colony. The railway workshops were working at high pressure, but they were unable to overtake the demand for rolling stock. The growth of railway traffic was phenomenal, and unusual steps had to be taken to cope with the business. He assured members that the vote on the Estimates was not a penny more than was wanted. If the traffic continued to increase at the present rate another large vote would be required next year. From the 1st of January there would be a completely new set of express trains on the different through lines. Tenders had been called for the construction of 500 waggons by private firms in the Colony.

On Wednesday afternoon the Council by 13 votes to 8 amended the Private Industrial School Inspection Bill so that all such institutions shall cease to receive any public grants after 12 months.

In the House several measures of more or less importance were advanced stages, and in the evening a Bill, to make the Military Pensions Act apply to members of the contingents sent to South Africa, was read a second time.

When the third reading of the Private Industrial Schools Inspection Bill was moved in the Council on Thursday afternoon the Hon. Dr. Grace proposed the re-committal of the measure for the purpose of reinstating the words 'as aforesaid' in clause four. He said:—By striking out the words 'as aforesaid' in clause four they made it impossible for about 200 girls who are at present being reared in the various convent schools of the Colony to remain their only homes. It has appeared to me you make them orphans for a second time. It is possible that the Council did not realise this aspect of the subject. The exact terms on which these girls are educated in the convent schools are these:—Fako St. Joseph's Orphanage, situated here at the top of the hill, and which I should be very glad if any hon. member would at any time inspect. There are altogether 89 girls in that orphanage. Of this number 37 have been committed to the charge of the nuns, either under the Industrial Schools Act, or under particular circumstances, as I understand, by the Education Department. Now, the contract which the nuns undertake, and the duty which they perform is one which I should like the Council thoroughly to appreciate. These children are sent there at various ages, some of them in their infancy, some at 13, some at 14, and some at 16 years, and so on. The nuns receive contributions from the Government to enable them to feed these children. My hon. friend Mr. Kelly the other day estimated the average sum to be £6 per annum for each. Now, in return for that contribution these children are educated and clothed. They are put out to domestic service as they grow up, or are taught a trade. The whole of their affairs are administered by the nuns until the girls arrive at the age of 21. A strict account is kept of all their earnings when they go to service, or the profits of their work when they are engaged in industrial pursuits. The money is collected in by the nuns and an account is kept opposite the name of each girl, and at least annually, and generally biennially, the whole of these accounts are inspected by a Government officer, in many instances by the Secretary for Education. When these girls happen to be out of service, they enjoy the right and privilege to retire to these convent schools as if they were their own homes, as, in fact, they are. They remain there and are taken care of until fresh places are found for them; their clothes are kept in order and their clothes are purchased for them. The nuns are responsible for them, and the whole of their affairs are regulated as by old-fashioned trustees under old-fashioned wills, until the girls either marry or attain to the age of 21. Now,

the effect of striking out the words 'as aforesaid' in clause 4 will be to prevent these girls, about 200, from being dealt with in these convent schools to their very great personal benefit and to the benefit of the State. It has occurred to me that this position has not been thoroughly realised by the Council, and that many hon. members may have their minds turned in another direction. I feel an injury is being done to the cause of these children and to the best interests of this Colony, and to remedy this I now move that the Bill be re-committed for the purpose of reinstating the words 'as aforesaid.'

The motion for the re-committal of the Bill was lost by one vote.

The most important business transacted in the House on Thursday was the adoption of a motion that a temporary agreement be made with Messrs. Spreckels and Co. for a continuance of the San Francisco mail service for 12 months, the new service to be every three weeks. The Postmaster-General read the conditions of the contract, which showed that provision was made for a 16 days' contract. The company received a subsidy from the American Government, and this Colony had been asked to contribute £30,000. Personally, he did not approve of subsidising the service on the conditions contained in the contract. He believed, however, that it would be in the interest of the Colony to maintain a rapid service across the Pacific. The Union Company had requested to be relieved of their contract on the 29th of this month, as they found they were being squeezed out of the trade, which he regretted, as the company had carried out the work well as far as New Zealand was concerned. He was of opinion that the Colony should enter into the contract entirely on its own account, and apart from the other Australian colonies. The present service cost the Colony £12,145, and under the three-weekly service the cost would be increased to £15,000. When penny postage came into force the net cost to the Colony would be about £17,000. Instead of 13 voyages, the annual number would be 16, and the average length of voyage from Auckland to London would be reduced from 30 to 27 days.

On Friday afternoon there was a painful scene in the House, during which members not only referred to each other in unparliamentary language, but even dragged in the names of their wives. One member was suspended for the balance of the sitting.

Several measures were advanced stages during the evening sitting, and the Maori Lands Administration Bill was read a third time, the House rising at half-past eight on Saturday morning.

The House met again in the afternoon, when the Manawatu Railway Purchasing Bill, which empowers the Government to enter into negotiations for the purchase of the Manawatu line, was read a second time.

The motion for the second reading of the Crown Tenants' Rebate of Rent Bill, which provides for a rebate of 10 per cent. on all rent paid within one month of due date, was stoutly opposed by several of the town members, who considered the measure uncalled for and unnecessary. The debate lasted until midnight, when the Speaker left the chair.

## THE FLOWERY KINGDOM.

### BITS OF CHINA. OLD AND NEW.

#### A CHINESE JESUIT.

A distinguished member of the Society of Jesus is Pere Laurent Li, a native Chinese, who, besides being master of his own native language and literature, is an accomplished Latin and French scholar. He is editor-in-chief of all Chinese publications of the Order—papers, magazines and books.

#### THE MAIN CAUSE OF THE TROUBLE.

Since the beginning of the troubles with China (says the *Catholic Times*) it has become the fashion in certain quarters to lay the blame for the hatred displayed towards foreigners by the people of the Celestial Kingdom on the shoulders of the devoted men who are spending their lives in preaching the Gospel among the Chinese. There may, and no one need doubt it, have been imprudence on the part of one missionary or the other. This is to be expected, for no one need hold that all missionaries are wise men. But it is not at all clear to our mind that the Chinese hatred of foreigners springs from the efforts of missionaries to establish the Christian creed in their midst. We incline to think the argument lies the other way about; that hatred of foreigners leads the Chinese to entertain hatred towards the missionaries. The Chinese have for centuries been peace-loving people, isolated, almost insulated from all communication with the outside world. They wish, rightly or wrongly, to have nothing to do with Europe, or with European manners and commerce. Yet Europe has forced them to open their ports to foreign trade, has forced them to allow the sale of opium, that curse of China, among their people, has cut up their territory in slices, and has shown them that they will one day be devoured when Europe considers itself healthy enough to digest them. All this makes the Chinese hate foreigners, and amongst the foreigners come the missionaries.

#### A TRUE ESTIMATE OF THE BOXER MOVEMENT.

Monsignor Favier, the Catholic Bishop of Peking, who appears, from the Blue-book just issued, to have been the only foreigner to estimate aright the true inwardness of the Boxer movement, has lived in northern China for a generation past, although he has only worn the mitre for a short time. At his episcopal consecration in the Cathedral of St. Saviour, there were present 12 foreign representatives, several members of the Imperial family, the Taung-ly Yamen, the Viceroy, most of the European residents, and 3000 native converts. The Emperor decorated the new Bishop with the Red Order, first class, in acknowledgement of the services rendered by Monsignor Favier for many years in the north of the Empire.

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