

some idea of the beautiful district of Canterbury in the neighbourhood of Christchurch just previous to harvest time. Harvest is later in the South Island, and at the time of our trip through this country, the grain, although still green and not full grown, stood four to five feet high on the average, and so even was the length of the straw and the full heads so close together, that at a distance a field would have the appearance of a new-mown lawn—"as smooth and even as a velvet carpet." Some of these "paddocks" (fields) were said to be a mile square, and would rival our mammoth Manitoba crops, the yield being even greater. The yields of the Canterbury and Otago districts, the latter lying just south of the former, are claimed to be the largest in the world, wheat averaging 35 bushels to the acre, while single fields of 70, 80, and even 90 bushels to the acre are boasted, oat crops giving even a greater return. The average wheat yield for the whole of New Zealand is, however, 20 to 25 bushels to the acre.

The gorse hedges I mentioned are unique and picturesque. A mound of earth is first thrown up and the gorse planted on top of it, thus forming

I have said of the farming lands about Christchurch. From Timaru south through the whole of the Otago District, the land is rolling, hilly, and in parts mountainous. Self-Binders (now of American and English make) are used exclusively in harvesting, the single reaping machine being a thing of the past. I am glad to report we succeeded in laying the foundation of what I hope and believe will be a good trade in Toronto harvesting machinery.* Approaching Dunedin the railway makes several "horseshoe bends" amongst the hills and along the cliffs by the sea, and for the last twenty miles affords some pretty bits of scenery. After going through several short tunnels, beautiful Port Chalmers—the port of Dunedin—comes into view. It lies at the entrance of the Otago Harbour, which extends nearly nine miles up to Dunedin, and is available for good-sized vessels the whole distance.

Dunedin is a splendid little city of 25,000 to 30,000 people. It is the most city-like city in New Zealand. The principal streets are neat and well-paved, the business section rather more concentrated, and the public buildings are more extravagant. Here one sees more of the genuine city life.

But there is not the slightest doubt that, with her great resources and most valuable territory, Maori Land will shortly overcome these obstacles to her progress, and in the meantime she has learned by a sad experience the old lesson, that it is best to "make haste slowly." The staple exports of the Colony are wheat, wool, and mutton, the latter being preferred and bringing a higher price on the English market than the Australian mutton. Mutton and beef are shipped in steamships provided with freezing chambers where the meat is carried in the frozen state. The ship in which I am now sailing has a small cargo of 3,115 carcasses of Australian mutton and 800 tubs of butter, besides the ordinary ship supplies, in her freezing rooms. The prices of sheep in New Zealand range from one to two dollars per head. Meat is so cheap that almost the poorest laborer may have it on his table three times a day. This is really a source of evil, since too much meat is eaten, and the consequent diseases are prevalent.

As will be inferred from the above, sheep and stock raising and agriculture are the leading industries, the latter being carried on much more extensively in the South Island than in the North. There are also several rich gold and coal mines, and other minerals are also found. New Zealand timbers are noted for their excellent properties in ship-building. The digging and exporting of Kauri gum, deposited from the Kauri pine tree and



PRINCES STREET, DUNEDIN.

not only an almost impassable barrier, but also a splendid shelter from wind as well. The admirably-kept farms thus hedged in and the splendid roads—more especially in the vicinity of towns—forcibly reminded me of country districts of old England. When one thinks of the short space of time in which this state of perfection has been accomplished, it is a source of astonishment.

It is much easier to get about in the South Island than in the North, there being railway communication between all the towns and villages of any note. All New Zealand railways are under government management, which is far from the best. The gauge is very narrow, and the cars on the whole are not equal to the ordinary first-class American car (which they resemble), although the fare, first-class, averages five cents per mile.

The journey from Christchurch to Dunedin by rail is 230 miles, passing through the very best of the country. This we took, stopping off at Ashburton and Timaru—each centres of the very best agricultural districts—and at each point took a long drive into the country to see it thoroughly. To tell of what we saw would be to rehearse what

The site is, however, not the most favorable, being on the irregular slopes of a group of hills converging to the harbour and is too much hemmed in.

Everywhere one went in New Zealand he heard of the "financial panic," with which the colony is now seriously distressed and which I have previously mentioned. That a severe financial depression exists there is every evidence, but as usual "newspaper talk" and the evil prognostications of pessimists have painted it in its blackest, and have not only aggravated matters, but exaggerated the situation. The national debt of New Zealand is at the rate of nearly as many pounds sterling per capita as the Canadian national debt is dollars per capita—a matter of no small concern. The great expense attending the opening up of the country, wars with the natives, etc., and especially bad and grossly extravagant governmental management have brought this about. The recent great fall in prices of the staple articles of export and the consequent depreciation of property has been one of the principal causes of the present depression, according to some authorities.

* Since the above was written, the Massey-Toronto machines have been introduced into the Colony, and have been so successful and met with such favor that a large and rapidly increasing trade has resulted—a flattering testimony to the worth of one of Canada's most flourishing industries.—ED.

buried in ages past by volcanic action, forms a large industry on the peninsula north of Auckland. It makes a superior grade of varnish, and is in great demand, the export of the gum for 1885 being valued at nearly £300,000 sterling. And so I might name other industries.

The most magnificent scenery in Australasia is in the South Island of New Zealand, its beautiful lake districts being noted, while the inlets and bays of the West Coast Sounds are compared to the grand scenery of the coasts of Norway, but our plans for travel would not admit of seeing these sights.

From Dunedin we went to the Bluff by sea, and as we sailed down the Otago harbour had a better opportunity of seeing its beauty and that of Port Chalmers than from the railway train. Arriving at the Bluff, which is at the southern extremity of the island, in the early morning, we at once took the train for Invercargill, of which the Bluff is the port. Invercargill is a scattered, unattractive town of probably 8,000 souls and presented the least enterprise of any New Zealand city we visited. From thence we returned to the Bluff to take sail the same morning for Hobart Town, Tasmania.

And now I must bring this my lengthy letter to a close.

Mr. Massey's letter on Tasmania (Van Diemen's Land) will appear in our next issue.