

detail. We need hardly point out the advantages gained thereby. At the present moment we may be justified in taking a more cheerful view of matters than is conveyed in the above gloomy retrospect. Recent sales of Provincial debentures will place our Government in a much easier position as regards finance, and will be the means of some pressing public works being proceeded with. On the other hand, we may fairly look for better prices for grain, whilst the late severe experience gained in business circles will doubtless lead to a more healthy and satisfactory state of trade.

With regard to the religious aspect and progress of the province, several events of interest have taken place during the year, which tend to make it a remarkable one in the annals of almost every denomination. The Diocesan Synod met on June 19, and the debates were characterised by unusual earnestness and interest. The Synod was opened with the solemnization of Divine Service at St. Michael's Church, Christchurch, after which the members adjourned to the Freemasons' Hall, which was kindly placed at their disposal by the members of the St. Augustine Lodge. The Bishop delivered a very able address, in which he announced his intention of visiting England, for the purpose of being present at the Lambeth Conference. This he has since done, having left Canterbury by the July Panama steamer. Intelligence has been received from him, announcing his safe arrival, and of his having taken part in the Conference, and in the religious services connected with it. In the course of his charge, his Lordship remarked that he had made arrangements for delegating to the Dean and Chapter all those powers not immediately depending upon the Episcopate. The most important business before the Synod was the consideration of the following resolutions, proposed by the Rev. the Dean, which, after ample discussion and some emendations, were carried in the annexed form—"That this Synod earnestly desires that the bond of union between the Church in England and the Colonies may to the utmost be retained, and be strengthened. That, for the purpose of giving effect to this desire, this Synod hopes that means may be devised of promoting united action and common counsel between all branches of the Anglican Church. Further, this Synod desires to express its satisfaction at the approaching Conference at Lambeth, as affording some indication of an approaching unity of action, not only between the various branches of the Anglican Church, but amongst all the reformed branches of the Church Catholic. That in the opinion of the Synod, any legislation of the Imperial Parliament bearing upon the status of the Colonial Church ought to be directed to the following objects, viz:—1. To remove all doubts as to the validity of the appointment and consecration of Bishops chosen in accordance with the rules in force in the several colonial dioceses, without reference to the sanction of the Crown by Royal mandate or otherwise. 2. To remove doubts as to the body of persons entitled to the legal ownership of all property, which now or hereafter may be possessed by the Church in the several colonial dioceses. Beyond the objects before mentioned, the Synod strongly deprecates any legislation of the Imperial Parliament affecting the organisation and freedom of action of the Church in the colonies. That this Synod expresses its earnest desire that a tribunal, or board of reference, be constituted in England for receiving and determining appeals from the colonial dioceses on questions of doctrine and discipline." They were engrossed and ordered to be entrusted to the Lord Bishop of the diocese for presentation at the Pan-Anglican Conference. Another subject of discussion was the revision of the Hymnal. For some time past a growing dissatisfaction has been felt with reference to the work now in use. In the Synod the matter gave rise to much discussion, but no definite conclusion was arrived at. The Synod broke up on June 28. The Collection known as "Hymns, Ancient and Modern," has been introduced into St. Luke's Church, and the majority of the congregation seem gratified at the change.

During the year several new churches have been built, and are now frequented by large congregations. The most noteworthy of these is the beautiful chapel just completed for the accommodation of the masters and pupils of Christ's College. It is a stone building, Early English in style, was built from a design by the Diocesan Architects, and was opened for the solemnization of Divine worship on October 28. Unfortunately, owing to the difficulty in collecting the promised subscriptions, nothing has yet been done towards the completion of the Cathedral. A meeting was, however, held in the Town Hall with reference to the subject, and the Commission was remodelled. Amongst the new churches which have been opened during the year may be mentioned the Maori church at Kaiapoi. It is a pretty and commodious structure, and what is a very gratifying fact, the Maoris contributed most generously towards its erection. The church is dedicated to St. Stephen. St. Mary's Church, Addington, has also been completed, and another church built at Templeton. Several new parsonages have been built, amongst others those of St. John and St.

Luke, Christchurch. A new schoolroom, for the use of day and Sunday scholars, has also been completed in connection with the former parish.

The Presbyterian Church has been making active progress during the past twelve months. A new church, situated in Lichfield street, Christchurch, has been opened, and is styled St. Paul's. A new and handsome church has also been built at Timaru.

The Wesleyan Church has also made great progress. Missionary meetings, both for missions abroad and at home, have been held, and the reports have been highly satisfactory. Several new chapels and schools (some of them used as places of worship) have been erected in various parts of the province. A district meeting has been held in Christchurch, which was attended by a considerable number of ministers, and an ordination service took place.

The various charitable institutions have been well supported during the year. The different institutions for the advancement of knowledge deserve a word of acknowledgment in this place. The Mechanics' Institute at Christchurch has been enriched by generous contributions of books, and a large and handsome hall for the Colonists' Society at Lyttelton has been erected. A Mutual Improvement Society has been set on foot at St. Albans. The Debating Society, originally established in connection with St. Michael's Church, continues to receive an accession of members. The Literary Society has suspended its operations for the present, but it is intended to revise it in another form.

The most noticeable event of the year in connection with education is one which applies to the whole colony. The want of that higher education which can be obtained only at a University has long been felt, and has been the means of drawing from the colony many families who would otherwise have continued to reside here. Several remedial plans have been from time to time suggested, and during the session of the General Assembly a Select Committee appointed to inquire into the subject recommended the institution of eight scholarships, two to be competed for each year. These scholarships, the committee observed, were for the purpose of affording to the successful competitors a first-rate University education in Great Britain or elsewhere. The liberal view thus taken by the committee was endorsed by the Assembly, and due provision was made for the scholarships in the estimates. By some it was considered desirable to make some provision for the establishment of a New Zealand University, and the committee was requested to consider that point. In their report they recommended that endowments should be made out of the confiscated lands, and out of the waste lands of the Crown in the several provinces, with a view to founding a University; but they declined to go farther in the meantime. The common school education of this and the neighbouring provinces keeps pace, in most cases, with the increase of population and the spread of settlement. The scholarships provided by the Canterbury Government were this year competed for by an increased number of candidates, and there is every reason to believe that the results already produced have been in the highest degree satisfactory in stimulating the efforts of teachers throughout the province.

The straits to which the provinces generally have been reduced, the effect in some cases of reckless extravagance, has strengthened the ranks of a party who have latterly aimed at the complete abolition of Provincial institutions. The popular voice seems to tend in this direction, or at least, towards a very radical reform; and even those who have been the recognised champions of the provinces have been compelled to admit that reconstruction at least is necessary. The Superintendent of Canterbury has roughly sketched out a scheme which he believes would answer the requirements of the colony. He proposes to divide the provinces into Road Board districts and Municipalities. The ratepayers in these districts would elect a certain number of members, and from these would be chosen one or more to represent the district or municipality in a Central Board of Works for the whole province. The Chairman of the Central Board would be chosen from among the members composing it, and would occupy relatively the same position as the Superintendent now does. The Land Fund of the province would be secured to the various Road Boards, a portion only being contributed by each to the Central Board for the purpose of carrying out public works affecting the whole province. It is argued that such a scheme would secure real local self-government, and render a large reduction in the taxation of the colony possible. Political agitation has latterly taken a special direction in the way of Financial Reform, and associations having that title have been established in Christchurch and Nelson.