

WEEKLY MERCURY

AND

Hawke's Bay Advertiser,

A Journal of Commerce, Agriculture, Sports, Politics, and Literature.

Vol. II.—No. 91.

NAPIER, SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 1877.

PRICE SIXPENCE



Government Notifications.

RETURN SHOWING THE LAND SOLD, AND RENTS AND ASSESSMENTS RECEIVED AT THE CROWN LANDS OFFICE, NAPIER, DURING THE MONTH OF JULY, 1877.

Date.	Mode of Sale.	NAME.	PARTICULARS.	AREA OF LAND SOLD.				CASH.				REMARKS.		
				Town.	Suburban.	Country.	Total.	Town.	Suburban.	Country.	Total.			
1877 July 30	Application	J. F. Chas. & H. A. Lambert.	Rural land, Taitape District, Blocks 39, and 40, Makarewa Reserve	A. R. P.	A. R. P.	A. R. P.	Total	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	Purchases under Section 18 of "The Hawke's Bay Special Settlements Act, 1872."
" "	"	E. W. Knowles	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
" "	"	M. S. Sattup	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
" "	"	H. T. Arrow, Junior	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
" "	"	Francis Foreward	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
" "	"	J. W. Edgcombe	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
			TOTAL				840 0 0				498 6 0			

RECAPITULATION.

£ 840 0 0
498 6 0
E 341 6

Land Sales
Rents and Assessments

J. T. TYLÉE,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

Crown Lands Office,
Napier, August 3rd, 1877



TENDERS are invited for the PURCHASE of the A.S.P. Co.'s Steamers "SOUTHERN CROSS," "PRETTY JANE," AND "STAR OF THE SOUTH," To be sent in any time on or before September 1st, 1877, addressed to the Directors A.S.P. Company. Tenders will be received for the Steamers as one lot or separately. Every information will be given by the Manager on application.
WILLIAM LODDER,
Manager and Engineer A.S.P. Co.

WAIPAWA COUNTY COUNCIL.

NOTICE is hereby given that the temporary office of the Waipawa County Council is at the Court House, Waipawa; and that the days on which it will be open for transaction of business will be on MONDAYS, WEDNESDAYS, and FRIDAYS. It is further notified for public information that the office hours are from 10 a.m. till 4 p.m., on the days above specified.
A. W. RAMSAY DAVIDSON,
Clerk Waipawa County Council.
Waipawa, May 14, 1877.

PROPERTIES FOR SALE.

9,000 ACRES Freehold, Agricultural and Pastoral, Seaboard, with 14,000 acres Leasehold, valuable improvements, and 18,000 Sheep, few Cattle, Horses, &c. 3,920 acres Freehold, rich pastoral land, Wairoa, with 800 Sheep, and 100 head Cattle 900 acres Freehold Agricultural and Pastoral Land, Wairoa 4,677 acres Freehold Agricultural and Pastoral Land, Wairoa, with 3,000 Sheep, and other necessary working improvements 25,000 acres Leasehold, Poverty Bay, and 112 " Freehold, close to town, with 20,000 Sheep, and improvements 4,200 acres Freehold Agricultural and Pastoral Land, Poverty Bay 11,000 acres Leasehold, Pastoral, Poverty Bay, with 3000 Sheep and few Cattle 1,600 acres Leasehold, half interest, Poverty Bay 28,750 acres, Poverty Bay, situate about 20 miles from Tologa Bay, title under Native Lands Court 1657 acres rich Pastoral Land, good title. Poverty Bay 1385 acres rich Pastoral Land, good title, Poverty Bay 8,800 acres Leasehold, excellent country, Tologa Bay, with 3,000 Sheep and good improvements 3,000 acres Freehold, Southern Seaboard, improved 1,220 acres Freehold, Southern Seaboard, improved 400 acres Freehold, Southern Seaboard, improved 1,200 acres Freehold, Rich Pastoral Land, improved, Opatiki 225 acres Freehold, excellent Land, Oamaru, with 1,600 Sheep, 30 head Cattle, and a few Horses, with improvements

M. R. MILLER,
Stock and Station Agent.

FOR SALE.



THE thorough-bred Entire "BLAIR ATHOL," Chestnut, rising 5 years, by Ravensworth, dam Moss Rose.

For pedigree and terms, apply to
M. R. MILLER.

FOR SALE.

MR. EVAN'S Draught Stallion "LORD NELSON," by "Sir Colin Campbell," dam "Blossom," etc. Liberal terms. For further particulars apply to
M. R. MILLER.

M. R. MILLER,
STOCK AND STATION AGENT

SHEEP STATIONS of various extent, and **FREEHOLD PROPERTIES,** Stocked and Unstocked, in the Provinces of Auckland, Hawke's Bay, Wellington, Canterbury, and Otago. For particulars, apply at the office, Browning-street, Napier.

RAMS FOR SALE.



LINCOLN
Lincoln-Leicester
Leicester
Cotswold
Merinoes,
All First-class Flocks.

STORE SHEEP.—Various Lots of Store Merinos Ewes and Wethers for Sale.

JUST RECEIVED

A
LARGE ASSORTMENT
OF THE
NEW WESLEYAN
HYMNALS.
ALL PRICES.
AT
COLLEDGE & CRAIG.

JUST RECEIVED

VIEWS
OF THE
BEAUTIFUL SCENERY
OF
ROTOMAHANA
WITH ITS
HOT SPRINGS,
TERRACES,
AND GEYSERS.
Price 2s 6d each.
COLLEDGE & CRAIG,
HASTINGS-STREET.

UNION STEAM SHIP COMPANY

OF NEW ZEALAND (LIMITED)
EAST COAST SERVICE.
AUGUST, 1877



NORTHWARDS.

For Poverty Bay, Tauranga, and Auckland:
Wanaka, s.s. ... Thursday, August 2
Taupo, s.s. ... Saturday, August 18
Taranaki, s.s. ... Thursday, August 20

For Auckland and Sydney:
Rotorua, s.s. ... Sunday, July 29
Rotorua, s.s. ... Sunday, August 26

SOUTHWARDS.

For Wellington and Southern Ports:
Taupo, s.s. ... Saturday, July 28
Wanaka, s.s. ... Saturday, August 11
Rotorua, s.s. ... Thursday, August 16
Taupo, s.s. ... Monday, August 27
Taranaki, s.s. ... Saturday, September 8

Passengers receive Free Pass for Steam Launch, at the Agents' office.
KINKOSS & CO.,
Agents.

E. PRICE & CO.,

(LATE CAMPBELL & CO.)
HAWKE'S BAY HOUSE.
WE HAVE OPENED OUR SAMPLES
OF
LADIES' AND CHILDREN'S
STRAW HATS
For the Spring, in 261 different shapes.

Also, Pattern Cards of 2 cases
FRENCH CAMBRICS.

The style of these goods is exceedingly elegant. The firm have very great pleasure in inviting ladies to select from the first show for the coming season.

E. PRICE & CO.

DIRECT TELEGRAM FROM EUROPE.

LONDON.

August 1. A great Turkish victory is announced. Osman Pasha, with his whole available force, gave battle to the Russians at Nicopolis. A severe engagement ensued, lasting two days. The Russians were defeated with a total loss of 8,000 killed, and 16,000 wounded.

IMPORTANT WAR NEWS.

(AGENT-GENERAL'S MESSAGE)

LONDON.

August 2. The Turks repulsed the Russians at Plevna with great slaughter. Osman Pasha, the new Commander-in-Chief, and Mehemet Ali are trying to effect a junction. A great battle is hourly expected near Tirnova. The Russians are making great efforts, as a further defeat would destroy communication with the army south of the Balkans, and the force there would be probably destroyed and the campaign concluded against Russia.

CABLEGRAM.

[REUTER'S SPECIAL TO PRESS AGENCY.]

SINGAPORE.

August 2. Sir Stafford Northcote, replying to a question, said that a special vote for the despatch of troops was not required, and it was needless to explain the intentions of the Government before prorogation. August 3. After desperate fighting for two days at Plevna, the Russians were completely defeated; 8000 Russians were killed and 24,000 wounded. Austria is partially mobilising. August 6, 9.32. The Russian position at Tirnova is seriously menaced. Sulieman Pasha has recaptured Eske Saghra. Russian reinforcements are hurrying across the Danube, and are making strenuous efforts to retrieve the Plevna disaster. Sulieman Pasha is actively pressing on the Russians. Mehemed Pasha is operating near Rasgrad. The Turks are advancing from Osmiu Bazar to Plevna to join Osman Pasha. Melikoff has been reinforced. A battle is now raging.

BOMBAY.

August 2. After 24 hours, continuous sitting, the Africa Bill passed through committee in the House of Commons. The Russians have been reinforced, and are advancing from Ardahan; the advance guard is near Pennek. The defeat of the Russians at Plevna is admitted. The Turkish forces are acting on the defensive; their loss is relatively small. August 6. The following is the result of the Goodwood Handicap:— Hampton ... 1 Skylark ... 2 Charon ... 3

SYDNEY.

August 3. The Treasurer has given notice of motion for Thursday in the Assembly, that, as the contractors of the Pacific mail service are unable to carry out the forked service, the House approved of the modification proposed by the late Ministry. A vote of censure has been carried against the Tasmanian Ministry, who have resigned. August 4. The Government were defeated last night. The House has adjourned for Ministers to consider the position. The Herald's special from Plevna says the Russians attacked and carried the first and second lines of the Turkish position, but were subsequently driven back by a deadly fire from the Turkish infantry. The Turks then advanced and recaptured all the positions, slaughtering enormous numbers of Russians. The Russian forces consisted of five divisions of infantry, three brigades of cavalry, and 160 guns. The defeat imperils the Russian position at Tirnova, and on the south of the Balkans. The Russians encountered a force

under Sulieman Bey and Redif at Eske Soghra on Tuesday, and were repulsed, losing several guns.

INTERPROVINCIAL.

AUCKLAND.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

August 3. An English gentleman, who is doing the tour of the Australian Colonies, was put to considerable inconvenience by the Rotorua failing to communicate with Napier on her way up the coast. He arrived from Sydney a few weeks ago, and took passage in the Rotorua for the South, intending to make a flying visit to the principal cities in the Colony. He stopped at Napier first, and left his wife and family there, intending to call for them on the return of the steamer, and arrive back here in time to catch the Zealandia, by which he wished to leave on her return trip. His dismay on finding that the steamer could not be tendered from the shore when she arrived off Napier may be more easily imagined than described, and he is compelled to remain another month in the colony.

DUNEDIN.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

August 4. Two thousand people are expected to take part in the trade demonstration today. The following resolutions will be proposed:— (1) That the system adopted by the Government, of importing manufactured materials required for public Works, is not only injurious to a number of artisans idle in New Zealand at present but detrimental to the interests of the country at large. (2) That it is the duty of the Government to do all in its power to keep capital in the colony, and that the system at present carried out of importing that which can be manufactured here is not the means by which that desirable object can be attained, but a policy more likely to impoverish than enrich the colony. (3) That New Zealand can probably manufacture rolling stock and bridge materials required for the public service.

Dixon is the captain of our footballers. W. D. Meares, Secretary of the Victoria Insurance Company, has been appointed General Manager of the New Union Insurance Company.

August 6. The United Trades Demonstration turned out a great success, and passed off creditably. The procession was over a mile long, and almost 3000 persons were present. The Mayor presided. Several excellent speeches were made, and the resolutions I telegraphed were carried.

August 7. Both Times and Star speak approvingly of Saturday's demonstration. The former cordially supports the resolutions because, as it says, "we firmly believe the protection given to industries by this colony by 16,000 miles of water carriage is and always must be amply sufficient without any further protection, that we can so completely agree with the proposals to give a preference to native industry wherever it is possible is clearly the business of the Government. By possible we mean whatever locally manufactured goods can be manufactured and sold to the public at an equal or lower rate than that at which they can be imported from home. We mean all this, and not one little bit more. If our foundries and so forth cannot contend to advantage with those of Birmingham, having at their back the enormous advantage of position, then the sooner they are all shut up the better. They can and will contend with foundries at home, and any Government which did not give a distinct preference to work turned out in the colony would be neglecting its duty to an extent which ought to imperil its existence."

The Star points out the distinction between giving a bonus and protection. The former is not only allowable, but would be highly advantageous, and all natural works should be manufactured here, even if at a slight increase on home prices. The latter denies it is asserted that no skilled mechanics or artisans came out except under misrepresentations, and says:—"It is quite possible and very probable some of the sub-agents exceeded or misunderstood their instructions, and to make up the number stretched the point in filling up descriptions in the contract tickets of intending immigrants. By that many free passages were obtained by the misrepresentations of the emigrants themselves, a fact which cannot be gainsayed, and certificates were found so unreliable that an angry correspondence upon the subject took place between Sir J. Vogel and the late Agent-General, especially in the cases of certain

insane and chronically diseased persons, who held first-class certificates of health, not to mention the well known affair of the Asia and other vessels, where the immigrants held certificates equally satisfactory as to character, and were described generally as domestic servants, milkmaids, &c. We are no defenders of the maladministration at home or abroad, but we cannot admit that the immigration policy is responsible for the depression of particular industries, with which all ordinary care has been taken in no way to interfere."

WAIROA.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

August 7. The Manaia left at noon for Napier with a favorable wind. The weather is splendid.

(PRESS AGENCY.)

DUNEDIN.

August 3. Messrs. Reeves and Roberts have been appointed a deputation to wait on the Government re railways. The Customs revenue last month amounted to £31,390, the amount for the corresponding month last year being £28,845.

One hundred and thirty-two applications have been received for work at Ralclutha. The men who have gone out complain that they cannot get work or credit from the storekeepers.

The Government has reduced the goods tariff on the Dunedin and Port Chalmers railway line, the general manager having received instructions authorising him to carry ships goods from Port Chalmers to Dunedin as class C, which makes the rate 5s 2d per ton. This order places the rates lower than they were before. The recent alteration of the new tariff will, it is considered place the Otago railway lines on a very satisfactory footing.

A large number of shares in excess of the limit fixed by the provisional directors for registering the company have been applied for in Guthrie and Larnach's Timber and Woodware Factories Company (Limited), so that, therefore, it has been successfully floated.

Market quotations:—Wheat prime, 7s 9d; inferior do., 5s 6d to 7s; oats, 3s 3d to 3s 7d; barley, 2s 9d to 4s 6d.

Mr Bradshaw reports Bank of New Zealand shares, £22 5s; National, £3 11s; Colonial, £2 2s; National Insurance, £1 2s 6d; South British, £5; New Zealand, £5; Mosgiel Woollen Company, £3 5s.

Eighty thousand shares have been applied for in Otago in the Union Insurance Company.

CHRISTCHURCH.

August 3. The following entries were received by the Jockey Club on Wednesday night:—

Canterbury Cup:—Walter's Venus and Transit, Ray's Mirielle, Reeves' Chancellor, Walker's Le Loup, Stephenson's Sapphira, and Satirist, Farmer's Ariel, Mallock's Tell Tale, Watersprite, and Tres Deuce, Saunder's Marquis of Normanby, Hill's Undine, Webb's Trump Card, and Jangler, Delamain's Templeton, Parthenopious, and Oberon, O'Brien's Mufti, Traducer, Flat Iron, Lima, and Flying Fish, Redwood's Guy Fawkes, Puriri, Waite, Mata, and Puriki.

Canterbury Jockey Club Handicap:—Walter's Venus and Transit, Ray's Mirielle, Danebury, and Middleton, Lennard's Bide-a-wee, Walker's Le Loup, Stephenson's Rob Roy, and Satirist, Hayward's Onaida, Goodman's Rose of Denmark (late Spray), Farmer's Ariel and Longlands, Mallock's Foul Play, Tell Tale, and Watersprite, Powell's Maroro, Saunder's Marquis of Normanby, Hill's Undine, Webb's Trump Card and Jangler, Delamain's Templeton, Parthenopious, Oberon, and Pungawerewere, Nosworthy's Traitor and Fallacy, Money's Maritana, Lunn's Guy Monuro, O'Brien's Zantippe, Rowe's Opawa, Redwood's Guy Fawkes, Puriri, Waite, Mata, Puriki, and Chokebore, Fraser's Bribery and Equation.

At a meeting of journeymen bootmakers on Wednesday night, it was resolved to form a trade union to resist the reduction in wages.

August 4. The entry of Logan's Cloth of Gold for the Canterbury Jockey Club Handicap, which, by an alleged oversight on the part of the Telegraph Department, did not reach Christchurch in time, has been accepted by the Jockey Club.

August 7. The railway receipts for June was £22,309, being £7,200 less than for April.

Mr Jas. Smith, for many years chief clerk of Cobb and Co's office, was found in the river this morning. He is supposed to have committed suicide.

At a meeting of the Operative Bootmakers Union it was announced that the hands employed at Toomer's large factory had signified their intention of joining, but subsequently finding that Toomer and Sons disapproved of it they withdrew. This action was warmly criticised and condemned by the meeting. A proposal was made to break up the Union, but it was negatived by 22 to 6. It was resolved to take measures to induce the bootmakers from elsewhere not to come to Christchurch for work.

Another meeting of unemployed was held yesterday at which there was a large attendance. Several men spoke in strong terms against the policy of the Government in bringing so many immigrants into the country, and a petition was drawn up requesting the Government either to find employment for men, or send them where they could obtain it. Over 200 signed the petition at the meeting, and the City is to be canvassed for further signatures. Another meeting will be held to-day.

At a meeting of licensed victuallers, held to consider Mr Fox's Local Option Bill, as affecting public houses, the Bill was entirely condemned.

LYTELTON.

August 4. The ketch Quiver was run down by the Taranaki off Pigeon Bay last evening. The crew, consisting of the master and one man, were saved. They got aboard the steamer, and were landed at the Pilot Station. There was hardly any wind, and the weather was not thick at the time. The ketch went down five minutes after being struck.

HOKITIKA.

August 4. A fire occurred this morning in a house in Revel-street belonging to a blacksmith named Andrews. The mother and two children were severely burned, and one child has since died in the hospital from the effects of the burning. The house was completely destroyed. No insurance.

August 5. The second boy of the Andrews family, burned at the fire yesterday, has died. The family, consisting of five children, were, with both their parents, all sleeping in one room, and they all were more or less burned; the mother is not yet out of danger. The two boys, who were burned to death, were aged seven and five respectively. The girls saved were aged 10 and 3, and there was an infant of four months. Every stitch of clothing was burned off all the seven. A delay was occasioned in opening the door by the handle being off, and that caused the disaster. The oldest girl had the presence of mind to get under the bed with her sister, and thus escaped the flames for a few minutes.

GREYMOOUTH.

August 6. The Coal Company reached the sixteen feet seam in their shaft on Saturday night. The coal is hard, and of excellent quality.

WELLINGTON.

August 6. John Conway, writing to a member of the New Zealand Times staff respecting the contemplated visit of the Australian team to New Zealand, says:—"You may calculate we shall be in New Zealand, if negotiations end successfully, early in January. The Australian team will, you may rest assured, make heaps of friends in your colony by their good behavior and good cricket playing. The matter is all in shape now, and nothing remains but to get leave of absence for three months, and for three of the team for twelve months. I expect articles will be signed in the course of a week and then I will send you the names of the full team. The twelve, you may state, will be chosen from the following:—Bannerman, Blackham, D. Gregory, Allan, N. Thomson, Kendall Horan, Murdoch, Kelly, Spofforth, Campbell, and G. H. Bailey (Tasmania). You can imagine what a team can be selected from the above." It has not yet been decided whether the start will be made from Sydney or Melbourne.

The ship Endymion arrived this evening from London, after a passage of 96 days from port to port. She brings a number of cabin and steerage passengers, but no immigrants. She has a full cargo of general merchandise.

August 7. The polling for the Te Aro reclamation resulted in 559 votes for, and 70 against. Only three people in the Te Aro Ward voted against it. Sailed—Stormbird, for Napier at

2.30 p.m. Passengers: Mr Parke and three in the steerage.

AUCKLAND.

August 6.

The meeting of the unemployed was largely attended. It passed resolutions urging an appeal to the Government, through the Mayor, to open up railway works on the second section of the Kaipara line on the Auckland station by day labor, or if contracted for to prohibit contractors from sub-letting the work a system which led to great evils; also, asking the City and Harbor authorities to push on the work.

The schooner Jessie Henderson, formerly in the Dunedin trade, was lost at Ramsay Island, on the South Seas, on the 14th July. The ship was 12 miles from land, and going at 8 knots in a steady breeze, when she struck a reef not marked on the chart. Every device to get her off was tried, but without effect. The water came in rapidly from a hole forward, and the vessel suddenly settled down about an hour after striking. The captain and crew barely had time to get over the side into a boat. The chronometer was the only thing saved, men not even getting their boots. The boat pulled to the island. The crew afterwards reached Levuka, where an inquiry was held. The Board acquitted Captain Urquhart of all blame. She was insured for £1500 in the New Zealand Office.

Latest Political News.

WELLINGTON.

August 3.

In consequence of the attitude of the Otago party, Ministers have receded from their determination to dismiss Sir Julius Vogel and substitute Mr. Stafford.

Probably Sir W. Fitzherbert will be induced to resign the Speakership, and lead a compact Opposition.

A Select Committee of the Lords will decide the fate of Wilson's petition. The petition in the Lower House will be re-mitted to them.

Mr. Rees gave notice of motion for the return of all land conveyances in fee simple from native owners that had been assented to by the Governor during the last three years.

Mr. Farnall has published a pamphlet in which he sets out a claim for £2000.

The Hon. Mr. McLean endeavored to snub Mr. Hamlin, who moved a motion for returns *re* Hinemoa. He said the information would be included in another return to be laid on the table.

Yesterday, on Mr. Wakefield's motion asking what fees had been levied by the Surveyor-General without the authority of the law, one member said if the principle of levying unauthorised fees was once granted, they might have clerks and understrappers charging tips of 10s for admitting the public to interview the Native Minister, or £1 to see the Premier. (Great laughter.)

The charitable Institutions Bill discussion was postponed at the request of the Borough Conference until Tuesday, The Conference will consider the Slaughter-house Bill.

The Government will be asked whether they will make the Native Lands Bill a Ministerial question.

August 4.

The Native Committee has agreed to report on Karaitiana's petition. It is understood they will deprecate the personal reference in it.

August 6.

There is a flutter amongst Ministerial Volscians. Mr Woolcock woke up on Saturday morning and found himself famous. When noses were counted it was found that the majority of the House was in favor of Mr Woolcock's motion for a change in the incidence of taxation. On Friday night, after the adjournment at 10 o'clock, Ministers scented danger. When the House resumed, the Premier endeavored adroitly to shift to another issue by debating Mr Rees's resolutions as a Ministerial question. The Opposition leaders saw the move, and thwarted it by putting Mr Thomson up to speak on Mr Woolcock's question.

On Saturday, Ministers held a long and anxious council of war, as the situation was critical. It was known that several Government supporters were pledged to their constituents to support the principles of Mr Woolcock's motion, amongst others Messrs. Ballance, Bryce, and Beetham. On Saturday afternoon the Premier had a long peripatetic interview with Mr Ballance in Tinakori-road, endeavoring to bring Mr Ballance round to new views on the subject of taxation. Ministerial wire-pullers were at work in various directions, endeavoring, it is said, to influence the press. Th whips became active, and land-

owners, monopolists, and big capitalists were to be seen lobbying.

On Saturday evening, it leaked out that the various elements of the Opposition were likely to find a common platform on Mr Woolcock's motion, which, if carried, would involve a rejection of the Treasurer's budget.

It is believed the Government cannot reckon on more than thirty-nine supporters on this question, giving them all doubtful votes, while forty-eight to forty-nine would support Mr Woolcock's motion.

It is currently believed that Ministers will seek a loophole to save their seats, by informing the House that they agree with the principle of the resolution, but it is not practical to carry it out at the present stage of transition from Provincialism, and the condition of the colony's finance. If they do so, they may possibly retain their seats for a week or two, but a want of confidence motion is sure to follow.

On the other hand Ministers might accept the resolution, and proceed to impose taxation. This would, however, disgust and disorganise their own staunchest supporters, and would equally bring them to grief. To-morrow night will shew what Ministers intend.

Some profess to believe Sir W. Fitzherbert is a secret agent, and is guiding the forces with a view of resigning the Speakership and becoming Premier. should the majority carry the resolution Fitzherbert could claim disinterested patriotism.

It is stated in well-informed circles that a compact Opposition is forming on a good basis, and only a few angles require to be rubbed off, when a direct no-confidence motion will be tabled. Mr. Bunny is conducting all negotiations between Sir W. Fitzherbert and the Opposition, but not with the former's acknowledged sanction. It is generally believed if Fitzherbert comes out, Ministers' lease of office is up. Ministers are decidedly uncomfortable.

Another lion in the Ministerial path is the Native Lands Bill. Takamoana has tabled a motion asking the Government if it intends to make a Ministerial question of this Bill. The measure is not wholly condemned, but a majority of the House appear favorable to the modification of some of its leading principles. It is believed the Government will not insist on the Bill passing *en globo*, but state that they are prepared to accept reasonable modifications, and thus escape defeat.

Messrs. Whitaker and Ormond are the only members of the Ministry who seem to have any tact and legislative skill. The others are mere stop-gaps.

Coleman Phillips is here watching the Land Bill.

To-day is one of rain and wind. The lobbies are dreary, and nothing doing.

Later.

It is stated on good authority the Government has not yet fully made up its mind as to whether Woolcock's motion shall be resisted, or will except it temporarily and prepare a fresh scheme of taxation during the recess. Attempts are being made to win over the waverers to the latter view.

August 7.

The general opinion appears to be that the Ministry are getting weaker and weaker every day. Messrs Ballance and Bryce have gone over to the Opposition on Woolcock's motion and will announce their defection this evening. Their influence is expected to carry others. Several old Government supporters are only watching and waiting to announce themselves Oppositionists. It has been discovered that in the Native Lands Bill clauses are introduced from the Act of 1869, which protect Hawke's Bay land transactions.

An amendment will be moved with a view of invalidating the transactions made, whereby equal shares were allotted to joint owners who only held small interests.

Sir G. Grey, it is understood, will be favorable to Sir W. Fitzherbert leading the party. Sir G. Grey would not take the office under any circumstances, but remain a general adviser, and lead the Auckland party in her interest. Mr Bunny continues negotiations on behalf of Sir W. Fitzherbert, but without the latter's sanction.

Sir W. Fitzherbert will not leave the Speaker's chair, unless assured of a strong majority following him.

A woman who applied for a situation as cabdriver, being asked if she could manage mules, scornfully replied—"Of course I can—I've had two husbands."

An old bachelor having been laughed at by a party of pretty girls, told them: "You are small potatoes!" "We may be small potatoes," said one them; "but we are sweet ones."

The Opposition main points of Policy.

WELLINGTON, August 3.

Many Canterbury and Otago members are sitting on the rail. They seem to desire to outbid each other for several little unconsidered trifles.

On the other hand, many Auckland and Otago members are strenuously endeavoring to form a compact party. A meeting of leaders will probably be held to-morrow. The main points upon which the leaders are agreed upon are said to be these:—

1. That it is unjust to grant subsidies to municipalities and counties on the hand to mouth system.

2. It is unjust to improve property by the local expenditure of borrowed money, which is a burden on the Customs revenue and falls on consumers and non-property holders. Property should be improved by local taxation.

3. That taxation on articles other than ordinary articles of consumption should be relieved as much as possible, and that income and property should bear a more equitable share of the burdens.

4. That the waste lands should not be sold in large blocks to monopolists before opened up, but first opened up by the State and then sold at an enhanced value.

5. That Lunatic Asylums, Hospitals, and Infirmaries, &c., should be maintained by State funds, aided by local endowments.

There are other minor points, but not communicated to your special.

Parliamentary Papers.

WELLINGTON.

MR. WILSON, THE EX-NATIVE LAND PURCHASER'S PETITION.

August 4.

The following is the petition of Mr. Wilson, the late Land Purchase Commissioner of Poverty Bay, presented to the House on Tuesday:—"That, at the request of the Government, your petitioner relinquished in exchange remunerative engagement with them for permanent employ. That your petitioner having no personal end to gain, but much to lose, as the event has proved, did persistently uphold as a Land Purchase Officer, the just rights of the public to its lands on the East Coast against certain speculators who seriously encroached upon the said lands, and also against the administration of certain officers and functionaries by whom the law was worked in a manner to facilitate and protect the said speculators so encroaching, and to hindering your petitioner in the discharge of his manifest duty to the public. That your petitioner deemed it his duty, very reluctantly, to report the proceedings and transactions of the said officers and functionaries to the Government. That your petitioner was moreover very reluctantly compelled to inform the Government of certain illegal and partial proceedings and transactions performed by the Native Land Court judicially, whereby certain of the said speculators were profited, and the public lost to the value of many thousands of pounds; and your petitioner submits that, if he erred at all in making this communication, he erred in not reporting several of the most unfavorable features in the conduct of the Court, whereby the public interest, your petitioner's labor in connection therewith, and the native's sense of business morality, were seriously and injuriously affected. That your petitioner further deemed it his duty to report to the Government the publication by a Judge of the Native Land Court of certain false and mischievous advertisements by which the said Judge, unmindful of the essential nature and quality of his functions, did prejudice many hundreds of thousands of acres against the public, and against your petitioner, before the titles to the said lands had been tried in his Court and before their claims had been even called in his Court; and your petitioner represented that the said Judge had unfitted himself, by the gratuitous publication of that advertisement, to adjudicate upon any of the numerous claims mentioned in it. That, for upholding the rights of the public against the above mentioned speculators and for making the aforesaid reports and communications to the Government in the interest of the public, and as your petitioner verily believes and humbly submits in performance of his duty, your petitioner unhappily incurred the displeasure of the Government. That your petitioner was thereupon unjustly deprived of his position without cause by the Hon. Mr Ormond, on behalf of the Native Minister, Dr. Pollen, to his very great injury pecuni-

arily, and exposing his reputation to injury by abrupt dismissal. That such dismissal was wrongful, and a breach of the engagement made between the Government and your petitioner. That the alleged ground of your petitioner's dismissal was upon the report of a certain Royal Commission. That your petitioner has never seen the said report, nor had an opportunity in respect to the same to indicate himself in any way. That the Commission, in its constitution, was not independent of the Government, and proved itself most partial and unfair in its mode of conducting the inquiry. The petition concludes by a prayer for an inquiry.

Borough Conference.

WELLINGTON.

August 7.

The Borough Conference yesterday passed a resolution condemning the present mode of deducting from subsidies, in as much as Municipalities have to bear an undue proportion of the cost of maintenance of charitable institutions. They recommend, first, that the cost and maintenance of such institutions should be provided for wholly as a Colonial charge; second, if necessary, to provide a revenue to meet such charge, a special rate should be levied over the whole colony on the basis of County and Municipal valuations; thirdly, if neither of these proposals be carried out, and deductions from the subsidies continue to be made, then that the share of contributions toward the maintenance of such institutions be between Municipal and Country districts, to be fixed on the basis of the number of patients or inmates of such institutions contributed by each. Those patients or inmates not assignable to any particular district to be charged as belonging to the whole, and the cost to be divided in a fair proportion amongst all subsidised bodies.

GREAT GALE ON THE AUSTRALIAN COAST.

LOSS OF A STEAMER WITH ALL HANDS.

Telegrams in the Melbourne papers dated July 15 give the following account of the gale on the eastern coast of Australia:—

A heavy S.S.E. gale has been blowing all night, and torrents of rain have continued all day, with a heavy sea on the coast.

The steam collier Yarra Yarra, returning to the port of Newcastle at 7 o'clock this morning, was driven over towards the Cawarra buoy, two heavy seas striking her and falling on board. When near the buoy an attempt had appeared to be made to run out to sea. The mizzen trysail was set, but at this time another fearful sea struck her, carrying away either funnel or the foremast, and in a moment after she gave a lurch and went down stern foremost. It was noticed at the time that the wheels were stationary, showing that the fires must have been put out by the seas breaking on board. A signal gun to prepare the lifeboat was fired from the look-out station, but a heavy squall came on at the time, and when it cleared the steamer was gone. A large quantity of wreckage came ashore on the North Beach. One body was seen but was not secured, owing to the heavy surf. Hundreds of people were on the beach and wharves at the time. One of the masts of the Yarra Yarra can be seen just outside Cawarra buoy.

The ships St Lawrence and Steelfield partially broke from their moorings at the wharf at Newcastle last night. The former came into collision with the barque Island City, carrying away her mizzenmast, but the other casualties were small.

J. R. Burns, the defendant in the case of the alleged abduction of Emma Russell, at the Maori Kaik, Otago Heads, was brought before Mr Mansford, at Port Chalmers, for the decision of the Court, in giving which the Magistrate said there were three things necessary to constitute abduction, to wit, that the girl must be taken from the absolute possession of her parents or guardians, also against their will, and she must be under sixteen years of age. Now, he had looked up authorities to guide him to a decision, and he found that a case of abduction was not complete unless blandishments or persuasions had been used to tempt a girl away. Now it appeared to him that nothing of the kind had been attempted by the defendant, neither could it be shown that he had actually taken her away from her father. Guided, as the Bench was by so much good legal authority, he could not send the case to trial, and therefore should discharge the prisoner.

We reprint in another column an able article from the columns of the Canterbury Times on the *ad valorem* du, question.

LOCAL AND GENERAL NEWS

The several sections of the Opposition have been casting about for a leader, but have experienced a difficulty in finding one under whom they could work unitedly. Sir George Grey's strong sympathies for the whole "human race" do not find an echo in the breasts of other non-contentants. The Adullamites of Canterbury, with Messrs Rolleston and Montgomery at their head, would not care for an Otago man as leader, so another effort, we learn, is about to be made to move the "old man eloquent" out of the Speaker's chair to become leader. Sir William Fitzherbert will not, however, be moved. He is too far seeing. The politics of the North and South would not be palatable to the people of Wellington, who view both Sir George Grey and Mr. Macandrew with distrust, and although Ministers may have made blunders and committed mistakes they are loyal to the interests of the colony as a whole, and not desirous of seeing it divided by the Separation party, who are only willing to let that question rest until a better or more fitting opportunity occurs.

The following was the number of prisoners confined in the Napier Gaol, on the 1st August, 1877:—28 hard labor; 1 for trial; 1 debt, and 1 imprisonment. In the Lunatic Asylum, there were 11 male and 5 female patients.

The want of a Bishop is being severely felt in the diocese of Waipua. No steps can be taken to supply the want until the Diocesan Synod meets, which will not be till September 24. We hear that it is likely the Revd. J. Stuart will be nominated and, no doubt, duly elected.

On the Estimates for Hawke's Bay, we notice that provision has been made for the appointment of a new office, that of Crown Lands and Forest Ranger £175, with traveling expenses £75. The office will, probably, be attached to that of the Sub-Inspector of sheep, who has not yet been appointed.

The proprietors of the Press Telegraph Agency at Wellington have imported from America a type-writing machine, with which an operator can write ninety or more words per minute.

By the Wanaka last week we were placed in receipt of the first copy of the New Zealand Herald for this session. It brings the debates in the Legislative Council down to the second reading of the Constabulary Bill, and of the House to commencement of Mr. Atkinson's remarks on Mr. Burns' motion in reference to the Dunedin and Kaitiaki railway.

Our special has wired us from Wellington the main points of the Policy of the Opposition now in course of formation. Who is to be the leader of the Opposition, and of whom will the Opposition be composed, will be the question put by the Anti-Separationists.

Mr. Trestrail, the well-known importer of horses, who was a passenger by the Ringarooma from Melbourne, has brought to Dunedin the smallest entire pony ever landed in the Colony. The little creature is six years old, and stands only 32 inches high. It is said to be extremely docile, and has been broken both for riding and driving.

The Hon. Mr. Fox delivered a lecture on Saturday evening last in St. Andrews Church, Lambton Quay, on the following subject:—"Does Prohibition Prohibit?" The hon. gentleman adduced a number of facts to prove that the law of prohibition was a success in various parts of the world.

Mr. Rees, in his speech on the Waka Maori, has made out a very strong case, but we think the subject would have been better left alone until the Supreme Court had given its decision. Mr. Rees cannot expect the House to decide on a question now before the Courts of law, and would show good sense by withdrawing his resolutions. He had his fling at the Government on the floor of the House, and as he knows he cannot carry his proposition, no good end can be served by at present wasting public time debating the matter.

The usual quarterly meeting of the Ark of Friendship Lodge, I.O.G.T., was held on Thursday. The following officers were installed by Bro. Saunders, Grand Lodge Deputy, assisted by Bro. Masters, P.W.C.T., and Bro. Stevens, P.W.C.T. of the Pioneer Lodge:—Bro. Higgs, W.C.T.; Sis. Elmes, W.V.T.; Sis. Consort, W.C.; Bro. Saunders, W.S.; Sis. Saunders, W.A.S.; Bro. Lingard, W.T.; Bro. Irvine, W.E.S.; Bro. Grinlinton, G.; Bro. Langam, O.G.; Bro. Palmer, W.M.; Sis. Williams, L.H.S.; Sis. Grinlinton, R.H.S., and Bro. Grinlinton, sen., P.W.C.T.

Information has been received by the Churchwardens of St. John's parish, that the Revd. J. Townsend has placed his resignation of the incumbency in the hands of the Primate. As soon as the Churchwardens can satisfy the Primate that the parish can support a clergyman, the Board of Nominators will be called together to appoint Mr. Townsend's successor. We believe the Revd. H. W. St. Hill will be asked to fulfil the duties of resident clergyman pending the induction of a permanent incumbent. The Board of Nominators consists of Dr. Spencer, and Messrs. T. K. Newton, and J. B. Fielder.

We understand that the residents on the White Road have petitioned the Chief Postmaster at Napier, to have a receiving letter box erected somewhere near the brewery. As this part of the town is a long way from the Post Office, and is thickly populated, such an arrangement would be of great service to the inhabitants.

The news obtained by the Special Reporter sent to London by the principal evening papers in the Australian and New Zealand Colonies relative to the great battle having taken place at Nicopolis or Plevna (the two places not being far distant from each other) is confirmed by a Bombay telegram received at an early hour this morning forwarded by Reuter's Agency. On this occasion, therefore, the Colonial Special beat Reuter's Agency in obtaining this important information by nearly two days.

At the Municipal Conference, now being held at Wellington, we are glad to see the ratepayers of Napier are not being left unrepresented, Mr. Sutton, one of the members for Napier, having attended, and is rendering valuable assistance during the deliberations. Mr. Sutton, although he has had no experience in the working of Municipal Institutions in Napier, has a thorough knowledge of what the requirements of the Borough are, and its interests at the Conference may therefore be safely confided to his hands.

The Catholic organ, the New Zealand Tablet, in an article on the new Educational Bill, characterises the measure as a penal law, and a wretched Bill. The Tablet concludes by saying that the "men who support this measure will earn for themselves the undying opposition of all lovers of justice and fair play, and the political execration of Catholics in particular."

By the Southern Cross we were placed in receipt of our Southern files of newspapers which were taken on to Auckland in the Rotorna. They contain nothing new, and now read "stale, flat, and unprofitable." In fact, owing to the very full telegrams we publish from "our own" and "special" correspondents residing in all parts of the colony, there are few events of a social or political nature occurring North or South which are not known to the readers of the MERCURY shortly after they occur.

The first fancy dress ball that has ever taken place in Napier came off on Friday, and was held in the large store that has lately been erected at the Spit by Messrs Kiroos and Co. The ball, being of a private character, does not permit us to give any description of, was a decided success, and no doubt will be followed by others.

Prima half bred wethers are now quoted in the Sydney market at from 28s to 30s per head, the same description of sheep being worth at Dunedin from 12s to 14s. We hear from private sources, that, as these prices leave a good margin for profit, it is likely a trial of the New South Wales market will be made. The s.s. Easy is now engaged carrying coal from Newcastle, N.S.W., to Dunedin; that vessel is peculiarly adapted for the carriage of live stock, and, having to return to Newcastle in ballast, freight will be low. The Easy can carry about 3000 sheep, the freight on which would not be more than 6s a head. The prohibition of live stock importations from England permit of this trade being opened up, although there may be some difficulty at first owing to seab being still in existence in New Zealand, the only colony in Australasia where that disease is prevalent.

At the annual meeting of ratepayers of the Ruataniwha District held last Saturday, the following wardens were appointed by ballot:—Messrs Henry H. Bridge, Alexander Jones, James Atchison, Reohab Harding, and Jasper L. Herrick. A rate of 6d in the £ was carried, at a meeting of wardens held after. Lieut.-Colonel Herrick was elected chairman.

The number of commission agents are still on the increase. Mr. H. R. Lascelles notifies that he has commenced business in that line at Port Ahuriri, and also as a debt and rent collector.

Nelson has woken up to recognise the fact that it has not a decent Theatre, and efforts are being made to rise one. The local Mail says the estimated cost is £1000, of which it is proposed to raise £500 on scrip, to repay which it is calculated that at least £100 a year will be available, as the whole of the receipts will be devoted to that purpose. The Committee cannot guarantee interest, but should the receipts exceed the sum mentioned the surplus will be distributed as a dividend.

The Masterton News Letter in a recent issue perpetrates the following:—"Two loving hearts were recently united by the Registrar of this place in the bands of matrimony. They did not escape the usual serenading by the usual boys in the usual manner, however, after disposing of their pertinacious and noisy invaders, they went out for a walk in the beautiful still night and being too full of unutterable love to rest, they left the bride cake in all its magnificence alone, uncut and uncared for until their return. Time flew, the air became chilly, and the phantom of the bridal cake rose reproachfully before them. They returned to make amends for their neglect, but, oh, shade of Clayson! who can depict their anguish, when with quivering lips and broken tones the bridegroom said, "Them darned boys have stole the cake!"

Our Waipawa correspondent informs us by telegram that the approach to the Home-wood bridge has been carried away on the Waipawa side, and unless it is repaired before the next fresh, the bridge will be in danger of being washed away. The repairs should therefore be seen to at once.

Mr Sharp, one of the members for Nelson City, will attempt next sitting to get free railway passes abolished.

The Melbourne Sugar Company have cabled to a local firm in Napier a reduction in price of their sugars, No 1 being £33 10s to £34 10s; according to quality; No 2, £32; No 3, £30 10s per ton.

The petitions sent to the Hon. Mr. Fox, for presentation at Wellington, from the Auckland District, in favour of an amendment in the Licensing Act, and against Sunday trading, are of considerable length and very numerous; signed; the former being 137 feet 4 inches in length, containing 4,788 signatures; and the latter 133 feet 11 inches in length, bearing 4,449 names.

It has been decided, and very properly, that the Post Office is the best site for the Town Clock presented to the Borough by the late Sir Donald M'Lean. The clock is to be fixed at the centre angle of the building, the face being on the central pediment. Above this there will be a bell-cot of eleven feet in height, in which will be suspended the clock bell. The work of construction will be commenced forthwith, and when completed will be a handsome finish to the Post Office.

A letter signed "Hyderabad Road" which appears in another column, calls attention to the disgraceful state of the public thoroughfare between the Royal Hotel and the Spit. Every road in Napier stands in want of repair, and little advantage appears to be taken by the Municipal Engineer of the standing order he has received to do this necessary work. At the rate the Borough "public works" are progressing, it is difficult to see how the work authorised, and the daily maintenance repairs of the streets can be proceeded with. If the very idea of expenditure paralyses the Council, what must be the feelings of the Engineer at the thought of having to employ another cart and a couple of men? We trust the ratepayers will have some consideration for those who occupy high places of incalculable responsibility.

A public fancy dress ball is on the tapis, to be held in the Oddfellows' Hall about the middle of next month.

The Dramatic Society, recognising the dearth of public amusements, propose calling a meeting this week to arrange a performance.

At the Education Board's meeting on Monday a petition from Te Aute, praying that the newly established school there should be brought under the control of the Board, was read and acceded to. A petition from Ormondville, praying that the Board would set apart a reserve as a site for a school, could not be considered, the Board having no reserves there.

In the R. M.'s Court on Monday there was only one case set down for hearing, Jessop v Cleary for assault. Five witnesses had been summoned, but when His Worship took his seat on the Bench, the complainant did not put in an appearance. The case was therefore ordered to be struck off, and His Worship vacated his seat. Shortly afterwards Jessop arrived, and was greatly chagrined to find himself non-plussed.

Dr Nesbitt, whose death on the 25th ultimo we announced, was born in 1819; he was educated at Trinity College, Dublin; entering the medical profession, he practised as a surgeon for fifteen years at Rostrevor. He then emigrated to New Zealand. On his arrival in this colony (says the Poverty Bay Standard) he soon made himself so popular by kindly gratuitous services among the natives that they petitioned for him to be stationed among them in the Rotorua district. He was appointed Resident Magistrate at Maketu where he lived for about seven years, during which time he served in a medical capacity in several expeditions then made against the natives under Colonel Whitmore. Owing to administrative changes Dr Nesbitt resigned this appointment, and in 1870 was appointed R.M. at Poverty Bay, with other minor appointments, where he resided to the time of his death.

The Rev J. Smalley, recently of Napier, has been lecturing in Christchurch on the war in Europe. He advocated that Turkey, as a nation, should be blotted out, and spoke in high terms of the Russians as a truly religious, and earnest people. Mr Smalley was followed by another gentleman, who took quite an opposite view of the question to Mr Smalley, pointing to the cruelties practised by the Russians in Poland and Bulgaria, and also denying that the Russians were better than the Turks as seen from a Christian point of view. The latter gentleman had to our mind by far the best of the argument.

Mr Bacheider, the well-known exhibitor of dioramas, is at present travelling in Australia with a diorama of the recent Arctic Expedition, and is expected in New Zealand in the course of a month or two. It comprises views depicting bear-hunting, sleighing excursions, breaking up the ice, seals, whales, walrus, bears, departure of the expedition for England, &c.

The following paragraph, taken from the Otago Witness of a recent date, will doubtless be instructive to certain gentlemen of the legal fraternity in Napier:—"Doctors and parsons are supposed to be the most quarrelsome people in the world, while lawyers are generally supposed to be wise enough to prefer settling other people by the ears to squabbling themselves. But there is something in the air in New Zealand which causes them to lose that peaceable affability towards one another which is usually supposed to be one of their leading characteristics. In Dunedin a few years ago one or two gentlemen kept the place intensely amused by their squabbles. A case was looked upon as an excellent opportunity to abuse the counsel on the opposite side—the clients' interests were never for a moment considered. Now, happily, this has ceased to be the case. But Palmerston boasts of three limbs of the law who keep up a triangular duel, to use an Irishism. This singular disease has broken out lately in Queenstown hitherto a tolerably peaceable place. There the lawyers talk of indicting one another for forgery and perjury, besides numerous other high crimes and misdemeanors. The population are much of the opinion of the old farmer who always drank a toast—"That every lawyer might kill a parson, and be hanged for it."

At the banquet given to Mr James Macandrew at Dunedin, Mr. Davis one of the speakers, who has recently returned from a visit to the Home country, in the course of his remarks, said:—"When he was in Glasgow, a large crane, said to lift about 60 tons, was about to be started, and there was a little demonstration. Upon being invited to attend the ceremony, he said it was of no interest to him, as he had come from New Zealand, where he had seen a crane of the same capacity long since. They asked him who made it. He need not tell the gentlemen present that before he left for home, a crane had been constructed by Messrs Kineaid and M'Queen, for the Oamaru Harbor Board. He did not accept the invitation because he had seen the whole affair before."

A London correspondent of a Southern contemporary, writing on sporting matters in England says:—"The interminable Sunday question pops up its head, even on racing matters. I do not know that it has been advocated in England to go so far as to race horses, as in France, on a Sunday; but the week that precedes Easter and contains Good Friday, appears to be the week of all the year at home for sports and athletics. People appear resolved to make the most of it, and wrestling, running, bicycling, swimming, &c., are in vogue, all over England, in the week named, and the defenders of the custom go further and say that Sunday afternoon would be well spent if devoted to many pastimes; that it was nothing but the archery practice on Sunday afternoons that gave England the victory of Cressy and Poitiers, while the quarter-staff play on the same occasion trained the pike-bearers to victory at Agincourt. These partisans maintain that the holiday, in place of being spent in self-castigation, should be devoted to a suspension of ordinary labour and to many recreations and training for arms. Without endorsing all this—I mention it, as a sign of the times, that these questions are not considered by a section in the old country as by any means set at rest yet."

It has excited not a little comment (writes the Parliamentary correspondent of the Wanganui Herald) that a Bill for the consolidation and amendment of the electoral laws has been promised in the present session by the Ministry, yet that no notice was taken of such a measure in the Governor's speech. If only one half the Bills pass into law which already constitute the ministerial programme, the session will have contributed to the Statute Book more than any two previous sessions. The result will be that hundreds of Provincial ordinances will be improved off the face of the earth, and an important step taken towards the consolidation of the statute law. The principal draftsman of these consolidating measures is John Curmin, Esq., barrister-at-law, formerly of Wanganui, who lately contributed to legal literature a very useful and practical book on the laws of New Zealand. Mr Curmin, in all his Bills, keeps in view the great object he sets forth in his work, and I do not think that a more painstaking, learned, and scientific draftsman could easily be found. The truth is, the science of drafting is with him a labor of love, and if his suggestions are carried out a perfect revolution will soon be accomplished in the laws of New Zealand so far as their expression and brevity are concerned.

An action for damages (remarks an Auckland paper) has been instituted against Mr. De Lias, the lessee of the Theatre Royal, at the instance of Mr. Thornton and other members of the Dramatic Company. The damages are laid at £100. It appears that the company rented the theatre at £25 per week, and commenced a series of performances there last Saturday night, and they played three nights. In consequence, it is understood, of the rent not being paid nightly, Mr De Lias's agent locked up the theatre, preventing the company from performing. At this stage, of course, little is known of the merits of the case, but it will no doubt excite some interest in theatrical circles if it is brought into Court.

A would-be wit in the Dunedin Saturday Advertiser writes:—"A facetious telegraphic reporter at Napier informs us that the Government keep, at the railway station there, stretchers ready for the injured. The reporter there must have been lying on a stretcher when he penned the message." The information contained in the telegraphic message was true, notwithstanding the doubts attempted to be thrown upon it. Stretchers are now kept at various railway stations on the Napier-Takapua line of rail, and considering the accidents that have occurred on the unfenced portions of the line, the precaution taken by the railway authorities to be prepared for an emergency is a wise one.

In a leading article on Mr Bowen's Education Bill, the Otago Guardian has the following:—"We observe that the ministers of religion in Dunedin hold a meeting on Monday next in relation to this question. We hope they will not be foolish, and like children who cry for the moon. When persons call for religion in the schools they are 'talking shop,' and people take it at its worth. We trust, however, that our Ministers will show themselves large-hearted and sensible in this matter. The merest scintilla of religion in the system will work confusion and heartburning, and do no good to religion. We hope they will not be influenced by the senseless prating of those who say it is doing despite to the Bible to exclude it from the schools, and who charge atheism and infidelity and hatred of the Bible against those advocating its exclusion. Such men are to thick-headed to waste argument on, and should be left to the enjoyment of their own self-righteousness. It gives them pleasure, and does nobody harm. But the clergymen, despite professional bias, must surely see that for all the advantages to be derived from this small measure of religion imported into the daily schools, it is not worth while to contend for the introduction of an element that will breed confusion and dismay. It is the duty of the Sunday-school to supplement the day-school, and the secular instruction of the other, combined, will form that education to which every mind should be subjected."

The Burlington Hawkeye relates that a distressed night editor, when he saw the reports of a Turco-Russian war, took down the map, glanced calmly over the field, saw what manner of names he would have to read proof of this summer, and went out and shot himself dead in the neck.

At Messrs Routledge, Kennedy and Co's sale on Friday of the Japanese goods recently imported, we noticed a good attendance of buyers. The goods were of a much superior quality to their first consignment, and, in our opinion, the prices were satisfactory. Two hundred and fifteen lots altogether were sold. We hear there will shortly be another lot shipped.

Mr Morrison, watchmaker, of Hastings-street, proposes to start a Mutual Investment Watch Society consisting of twenty members. The object is for members to obtain watches on the deferred payment system.

We must give credit to our special correspondent at Wellington for being the first to obtain political information as to what is transpiring at the seat of government. As a proof of this we may mention that in our telegraphic columns of the 25th July, was announced the death of Dr Nesbitt on that day. No sooner had the news reached Wellington than our reporter wired us back that Mr Kenrick, the Clerk of the Bench at Greymouth, would receive the appointment. This information is now confirmed, Mr Kenrick's appointment having been announced officially.

The shareholders in the Napier Theatre Company are to be congratulated on securing so excellent a site as the one agreed to be purchased at the general meeting on Monday. The section is that on the Shakespeare road immediately above the office occupied by Mr Upham. It has a long frontage to the street, and is amply large enough for the purpose required. The price of it, too, is such as to insure shareholders against loss, and should it be decided to build a theatre without delay, we have no doubt the investment will ultimately prove remunerative. The movement, we hear, has again woke up the Oddfellows' who propose leasing the Hall for a long term.

The cost of education in the Hawke's Bay provincial district is estimated at £5980. The income from educational reserves is only £780.

Some slight modifications in the specification of the Spit ferry service have been agreed to by the Harbor Board. It has been decided that a punt for the conveyance of dray and bullocks is unnecessary as the steamer of Messrs Holmes, the successful tenderers, is of such build as to enable a dray to be driven upon it. The ferry service is to be an hourly one, subject, however, to be made half-hourly, should the Board during the five years' contract, find it necessary to make the alteration.

Mr Henry Clapcott has been re-transferred from Christchurch to Wellington as chief agent of the Government Insurance Department. He has left Christchurch and has been succeeded there by Mr T. L. Shepherd, who has for some time been officiating as chief agent in Wellington.

The members of the Orange Lodge, No. 25, presented, on Monday, the Rev. J. C. B. Eccles with the Bible mentioned by us in our report of the anniversary proceedings of the Lodge. The presentation was made by Grand Master Lindsay, in an appropriate speech. The recipient of the presentation, the Rev. Mr. Eccles, in a speech of some length, thanked the members, and spoke in general terms of the Order.

A general meeting of the shareholders of the Napier Theatre Company was held on Monday at Mr Mayo's Empire Hotel. Mr G. H. Swan occupied the chair. The Secretary pro tem, Mr B. Johnson, read the minutes explaining that since they last met the Secretary Mr Upham, and the Treasurer Mr Manoy, had both resigned, and their places had been filled by himself as Secretary, and Messrs Sheehan and Swan as joint Treasurers, who had received and paid in to their credit £103. The sub-committee appointed to consider the most suitable site for a Theatre had reported in favor of two, namely, one in Tennyson-street, adjoining the Protestant Hall, owned by Mr Gillespie, and offered at £800, and one running from Shakespeare-road to the quarry, owned by Mr N. Williams, and offered for £600. These minutes were confirmed. The Chairman then brought under the notice of the meeting that Mr B. Smith had prepared plans, and given an approximate estimate as to the cost of turning the Oddfellows' Hall into a theatre. The plans then were laid on the table, and shewed that if these were adopted the Hall would contain 800 seats, and cost £1500. A long discussion ensued, but as was pointed out by Mr Mayo, the object of the company was to obtain a freehold site, the proposition was afterwards withdrawn. It was afterwards stated that Mr Gillespie had withdrawn the site offered by him, and a proposal was then made, "That the quarry site, owned by Mr N. Williams, be accepted for the purpose of building a Theatre." Mr Johnson moved an amendment to the effect that the Company be wound up. The amendment was negatived and the resolution carried. Mr Manoy was then elected treasurer of the company, and Mr Ellis was associated with him for the purpose of signing cheques. Mr B. Johnson was elected secretary, and the meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

The entertainment given on Monday in the Taradale Schoolroom by the Mutual Improvement Society was in every sense a success. Notwithstanding the severity of the weather, the room was full of young, middle-aged, and old, who all testified their pleasure at the excellent treat afforded them. The following gentlemen took part in the programme:—Messrs Dryden, Jeffares, Gilberd, Gold, and Chas. O'Dowd, besides one or two other gentlemen volunteers. The songs of Messrs Gold and Dryden in the first part were admirably rendered, both being in good voice. Miss McDonald gave a recitation of the "Gambler's Wife," which she did excellently, and gained great applause. The entertainment concluded with a comic piece entitled "Love, Rivalry, and Revenge," which created an immense amount of amusement. We understand the members of the Society are so pleased with the reception they obtained that they purpose giving a similar entertainment, with a change of programme, in the course of next week.

We hear that, in the matter of Russell v. Waka Maori, the evidence of the natives for the defence was finished on Tuesday, after sixteen days and four night's sittings of the Commission. The Maori evidence on behalf of the plaintiff will now have to be taken, but it is expected that the work of the Commission will be completed by next Monday.

The Wairoa local paper strongly advises people about to travel in the Mahia direction to make their wills before starting. People travelling round Hyderabad-road at night would do well to insure their lives. They run a chance of being smothered in the mud.

The Wairoa people are anxiously enquiring when the Inspector of Schools purposes visiting that district, as in his annual report he made a promise to visit "as soon as the bar became fairly navigable." The local paper says:—"The river has been navigable now for some time, we have had winter rains enough to satisfy even Jupiter Pluvius himself but no Inspector!" The editor of our contemporary appears to be unaware that the Inspector is busily studying Philosophy.

During Capt. Russell's recent visit to England, he appears to have been keenly watching the various alterations and improvements made during his absence with a view of introducing the result of his observations on the attention of the Government of this colony. On Tuesday he brought before the attention of the House the necessity of a measure to secure the copyright of works of art, and also pointed out the benefits to be derived from a system of parcel post, now working with success at Home. Capt. Russell's short absence from New Zealand may prove to be of service to his constituents.

The report circulated as to the Government having withdrawn from the Legislative Council the Friendly Societies Bill turns out to be incorrect. This Bill passed its third reading in the Upper House with amendment, on the 2nd instant, and was sent to the House of Representatives, to be there further legislated upon.

The steamer Manaia has brought down this trip from Wairoa an immense quantity of sweet briar roots, evidently imported here for hedge planting. It is a comfort to think the Wairoa settlers have at last turned their only industry into account.

The Waipawa County Council held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, in the Waipawa Court House. All the members were present with the exception of Mr Rathbone. After the minutes of the last meeting had been confirmed, correspondence was read. Mr Brewer was appointed pound-keeper at Sherwood. The tenders for the maintenance of roads in the County were, after a slight discussion, all rejected. The monthly vouchers were all passed for payment. The Council went into Committee of Ways and Means, the report of which is to be brought up for adoption at a special meeting to be held on Friday next at 11.30.

The Government do not purpose printing for circulation the suggestions made by the several County Councils and Road Boards as to amendments in the County Act. The opinions are said to be as diverse as possible, and of little value.

The Government intend this session bringing down an Amendment Bill to the present Rating Act, in which it will be proposed to relieve the Boards from the compulsory annual valuation, as laid down in clause 6.

The Canterbury Press' Parliamentary correspondent writes to that journal:—"No steps have been taken to form an Opposition, yet members opposed to the Government think a party could easily be formed to oust the present Ministry if a leader could be agreed on. Canterbury members hold the balance, and though many of them would vote against the Government, especially on the proposals to charge Canterbury's debts on the land fund, yet they will not accept Sir George Grey as leader to replace Major Atkinson."

We take the following from the Otago Daily Times:—"A great hoax was perpetrated on two hotelkeepers at Auckland on the 24th of last month. Some unknown swell ordered wedding breakfasts at two hotels, and offered to pay a deposit, which the bonifaces of course declined. Both prepared spreads regardless of expense, but no one appeared to eat the good things. One of the hotelkeepers, after the manner of a historical providore, went into the highways and bye-ways, and brought in whoever chose to partake of the marriage feast."

A judgment summons case against a Post office clerk, not now resident in Hokitika, was heard by the Resident Magistrate, Mr. Fitzgerald, on Friday, during which, in answer to a request that immediate payment might be enforced, the magistrate remarked that an able-bodied laborer would have a far better chance of meeting his liabilities than a Post-office clerk. His Worship observed that Post-office clerks were by no means overburdened with heavy salaries, and made an order for a reasonable monthly amount to be paid.

Hokitika does not appear to be a haven of bliss, according to the West Coast Times, which says:—"We have scarlet fever in every street, medical men worked almost off their feet, by far the highest death rate in the whole colony, and such an increase in the number of funerals as to lead to the opening of another establishment for the supply of the ghastly requisites of those expensive ceremonies. Further, although we have no official information on the subject, one medical man is said to have fifty cases of fever in his own practice, and another admits that not only are his cases more numerous than they were during the last summer, but they are of a more virulent type."

Christchurch knows not its greatest men walking about unemployed is a son of Mark Lemon. The genial editor of Punch, it will be remembered, did not leave his family in flourishing circumstances, and his eldest son has come out here to seek his fortune. The bearer of the name, Mark Lemon, will surely not find any difficulty in getting a living. In the humble capacity of railway clerk is, or was not long ago, a son of Charles Halle, the well-known musician. For ought that I know, there may be more such men here, but these two instances are enough to show that we are not without instances of the vagaries of Dame Fortune.—Correspondent Otago Guardian.

We understand that circulars were recently addressed to the officers commanding Militia and Volunteer districts in the Middle Island, informing them that their services would not be required after the end of July last. If the Government (remarks a Southern contemporary) have made up their minds that in the interest of economy the Volunteering system should be brought to an end they will possibly find themselves supported by a large majority of the House, but knowing as they must have done six months ago that the salaries of these officers were to be discontinued, they most certainly should have informed them of what was proposed. Instead of this they have been guilty of an uncalled for and wanton piece of cruelty in waiting until the last moment, and then giving them notice that in four or five days time their pay would cease. The House will surely not tolerate an act of unfitness so gross as this.

The Wanganui Chronicle reports that a number of male vagrants are roaming about the Wanganui streets.

The quarterly election of officers of the Napier Pioneer Lodge, No. 26, I.O.G.T. took place on Wednesday in the Rechabite and Templar Hall, Emerson-street, when the following officers were installed by L. D. Bro. Stevens, assisted by P.W.C.T. Bro. W.N. Grinlinton, and W.C.T. Bro. Higgs of Ark of Friendship Lodge:—Bro. Jas. S. Master, W.C.T. (re-elected); Bro. E. Corbett, W.V.T.; Sis. Berriman, W.C.; Sis. —, W.S.; Bro. F. Martin, W.A.S.; Bro. G. Boggs, W.T.; Bro. R. P. Brydson, W.F.S.; Bro. F. Hollins, W.M.; Bro. Ryder, W.D.M.; Bro. Storkey, W.I.G.; Bro. B. Palmer, W.O.G.; Sis. E. A. Warren, W.R.H.S.; Sis. A. Robinson, W.L.H.S.; Bro. G. Trimmer, P.W.C.T. The above Lodge is progressing very favorably on the whole. During the last quarter there were three sisters, and 13 brothers initiated into the Order, and fresh members are flocking in nightly to join its ranks.

It is understood that the Hon. Mr. Ormond will bring down his Public Works Statement at an early date in order that members may be placed fully in possession of the Government proposals as to additional works for which the new loan of £2,000,000 is recommended.

A serious accident took place at Picton on Monday week to a son of Mr A. P. Seymour. The boy was standing with the butt of his gun resting on the ground and his left hand on the muzzle, when it went off and the bullet pierced through the knuckles, tearing the flesh from the fingers and passing through the rim of his hat. The escape from death was of the closest description.

A few days since, Mr Meyers, of the Otaio, lost three valuable draught horses, they having dropped down dead suddenly while in harness. It is supposed, says the "Waitangi Tribune," that some sheepwash had fallen on straw, and the animals had eaten thereof.

Mr. Passmore is said to have written an able reply to the slurs cast on him by the Commissioner on the Auckland railways, whose report the Government withheld. The production of Mr. Passmore's letter will be moved for in the House at an early date.

We understand that another Penny Reading will be given in the Hall of the Athenaeum on Monday evening next.

A man named Spencer was on Thursday brought before His Worship the Mayor charged with having been unlawfully last night on the premises of Mr Massey Hutchinson, and was sent to prison for 14 days. Spencer informs the police that he was formerly in the Mount View Lunatic Asylum, and that the authorities at Wellington had paid his passage to Napier. The police are now making diligent enquiries as to the truth of Spencer's story. We ourselves have often noticed the man's name in the police reports of the Wellington papers as being brought up for drunkenness and a vagrant. If Spencer's statement is true, it certainly reflects no credit on the officers in Wellington to pay for the passage of their vagrants to this or any other part of the colony. We recommend the police authorities to return him from whence he came, ticketed "Not Wanted."

Mr Macandrew has moved in the House a series of resolutions as to the opening up of more railway lines in the Otago district. The Government oppose the scheme on the ground that it was not a Colonial one. Messrs Seymour and Curtis advocated the construction of a main line through the north of the Middle Island. The discussion was altogether premature, as the Minister of Public Works has not yet made his statement.

Napier has the reputation of enjoying a splendid climate, but we cannot fully realise what we do enjoy without making a comparison between the weather we have here and that which other places on this coast have to suffer. For instance, on Wednesday, at Castle Point, snow was lying thickly on the ground to the very edge of the beach, and on Tuesday, a bitterly cold gale, accompanied by sleet, snow and hail, rendered the place miserable.

As we surmised, Sir W. Fitzherbert will not leave the Speaker's chair to take the lead of the Opposition. It is now thought he has an eye on the Agent-generalship. This is far more likely, but we should imagine after all he would prefer the dignity and ease of his present position. Mr Bunny had much influence with Sir W. Fitzherbert, when the latter gentleman was Superintendent of Wellington, but the Speaker of the House of Representatives is a far different man to hoons.

The whole body of Colonial police whose wages have been reduced have caused (says the Buller Times) to be grateful to Sergeant Moller, of Greymouth. The cute sergeant, who had well learned his "dooties" under the new regulations, was a witness in a civil case at Greymouth the other day and was placed in the box. He took the book, but pressed it not into his lips until he had been satisfied on one point, "Who is to pay my expenses?" asked the sergeant, and (says the local paper) "the Bench, Bar, and British public looked up in astonishment, but the Sergeant didn't mind a bit, for he quietly pulled out a book and quoted a clause in the Constabulary Act whereby he was entitled to claim what he sought. The parties to the suit submitted with a good grace to this extra charge."

We understand that the members of the Loyal Napier Lodge, have accepted an offer from Messrs Ashton and Swan to lease the Napier Oddfellows Hall for a term of thirty years, at an annual rental of £100. The essees contemplate making alterations and likewise improving the building, so as to meet public requirements in the matter of accommodation.

The Clerk of the Waipukurau Road Board, although in doubt as to the necessity of carrying out the instruction contained in a circular forwarded by the Government to the chairman of the Board, as to the gazetting of newly-elected Wardens, sent a communication to the Government Printer on the subject, to which he received the following reply:—"Hawke's Bay Ordinance does not require Wardens to be gazetted: The practice has been discontinued by the Colonial Secretary.—George Didsbury.

The amount given to old Provincial officers as compensation for loss of office through abolition amounts to £12,719. The Treasury is closed against giving any further money.

The meeting of the Napier Literary Society at the Trinity Church school-room was well attended on Wednesday. Several members gave readings, recitations, &c. Next week Mr D. K. Davis promises to give an essay on Longfellow.

In the Estimates for the current year, there are very few increases in salaries, the principal being £50 to the Secretary for Stamps, £200 to the Colonial Architect, £200 to the Under-Secretary for Crown Lands, £25 for a new appointment of Record Clerk to the Inspector of Lunatic Asylums, £50 to the Under-Secretary for Justice, £50 to the Secretary for Post Offices, £100 to the Postmaster, Wellington, and £350 for a new appointment of Inspector of Lighthouses. The Education Estimates total to £135,000, including £120,000 for grant to Boards, calculated on an average attendance of 40,000 at £3 10s each, less £20,000 revenue from reserves. The Secretary is to have £600 For Normal schools the vote is £6000, and for salaries of Inspectors, £3000. The vote for prizes for Colonial rifle shooting, passages of competitors, &c., is altogether omitted. In the miscellaneous there is no vote proposed for maintenance of the Government steamers. £60 is down for specimens of New Zealand woods at Kew Museum, and £175 for the travelling expenses of the Resident Magistrate, between Waikouiti and Palmerston from 1867 to 1877. A vote of £3000 is set down as an honorarium to Sir Julius Vogel for services in England, and £400 for a work on New Zealand grasses.

An amusing scene (says the Post) occurred in the House on Friday afternoon. The Attorney-General (Mr. Whitaker), when answering a question put by Karaitiana as to the Native Lands Bill, spoke in accents more sweet and mellifluous than loud, and when he sat down Mr. Travers rose, and, after a preliminary "hem," addressed the Speaker as "Your Honor." When the laughter caused by this *lapsus linguae* had subsided, Mr. Travers proceeded to submit a polite request to Mr. Whitaker to speak a little more loudly. He had not resumed his seat a second before Mr. Whitaker solemnly took the floor, and in plaintive accents complained that he *did* wish Mr. Travers would speak up, as he had not been able to catch even the drift of the honorable members' remarks. There was a grim irony in the manner of the retort which appeared irresistibly funny.

The Nelson Mail quotes the following as one of the latest devices of the Stamp Department "raising the wind:—"Within the last few months a man died in Wellington leaving as his sole executrix, a relation living in Nelson. The property was small, being under £200, and the estate was insolvent, there being a deficiency shown from the first of £46. One of the assets was a tool chest, which was valued at the lump sum of £25, but this would not do for the Stamp Department. No, the whole of the tools must be set out in detail, and a separate value given to each item. The delay that was thus caused in proving the will was a serious annoyance to executrix, and the costs in one way and another amounted to close on £7, the greater part of which was entailed by the harassing conditions imposed by the Department.

The Wellington correspondent of a Wairarapa paper writes:—"Your Resident Magistrate, Mr H. S. Wardell, has arrived here for the purpose of conducting the business of the Court during the illness of Mr Crawford. Reports are in circulation regarding the arrangement, one version of which is that even although his recovery may be complete, Mr Crawford will not again resume his duties, and that Mr Wardell, who is known and respected to be a hard-working, painstaking magistrate, will be offered the position. I merely give you the report for what it is worth, and with the full knowledge that Mr Wardell's term of office will soon expire when he will be entitled to retire on full Government allowance.

Mr. W. Shanly has presented a silver medal to be shot for by the Napier Artillery Volunteers. The medal has been designed and made by Mr. Shanly. Its shape is a Maltese Cross, having a medallion centre containing the Queen's head, encircled with a gold laurel wreath. The workmanship and design reflect the greatest credit on Mr. Shanly.

LATEST TELEGRAMS. CABLEGRAM.

[REUTER'S SPECIAL TO PRESS AGENCY.]

LONDON.

August 4.

Money is firmer. Consols 95. Australian securities steady. Wheat market weaker; Adelaide, 66s to 68.

Arrived—Glenloga and Loch Urr

August 6.

The Russians state their loss at Plevna was only 5,000.

Osman Pasha's forces have been reinforced, and are now strongly entrenched at Plevna.

The Russians are encamped six miles east from Plevna.

Fighting is still going on at Rasgrad. The Russians, after their defeat at Eske Saghra, south of the Balkans, retreated in disorder.

Sulimano Bey now occupies the Kainbozha Pass.

Hobart Pasha is cruising in the Black Sea.

The expedition to the Caucasus has been abandoned.

The relations between Greece and Turkey are critical.

SINGAPORE.

August 8.

The Russians have evacuated all the positions previously occupied by them south of the Balkans, except the Scipa Pass.

The Turks have reoccupied Kasanlik.

SYDNEY.

August 7.

Sailed—Easby, for Melbourne.

Arrived—Rotorua and Arawata, also Duchess of Edinburgh, from London. The latter passed a derelict schooner during the passage, but the weather was too stormy to communicate with her. She is supposed to be an American vessel.

August 8.

In consequence of the defeat of Ministers they have asked the House to pass an Appropriation Bill, with the view to a dissolution. Nothing, however, has been decided in the matter yet.

INTERPROVINCIAL.

DUNEDIN.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

August 8.

Owing to the failure of the Auckland Brigade to arrange a competition this year, our Brigade intend taking steps to send a team over to Victoria next year.

Mr Aitken, of Auckland, the author of the "Veritas" design for the Town Hall, threatens the Municipal Council with an action for compensation for loss of time in preparing the same.

The Licensed Victuallers has called the Council's attention to section 189 of the Local Option Bill, which charges the costs of taking votes under the Act against the license fees collected. The Council agreed to the request, and Mr Reeves is to bring under the notice of the Government the undesirable nature of the clause.

The Council unanimously agreed to Mr Fish's motion to adopt the Municipal Act in such a manner as there should be no Mayoral election in November. Mr Walters stated that that was the understanding of the late Council, but his statement received a contradiction.

The Jockey Club had a very successful meeting. The attendance was larger than ever before known on account of the interest in the election of a new committee. Despite the unusually large expenditure of £8,208 during the year, the Club commence this season with a credit balance of £1,782. The Club was the means of adding £240 to the Benevolent Asylum fund. An effort to elect quite a new committee was successful, only one old member of it being returned.

August 9.

Mr. Brindley, of Christchurch, has been appointed agent of the Victoria Insurance company, vice Mears.

The steamer Koputai is to be purchased by a Lyttelton firm.

The Good Templars have forwarded to Mr. Fox five petitions for his Bill, bearing 6527 signatures. 2260 are from Dunedin and suburbs, 2085 from inland towns, and 1092 are from Southland.

GISBORNE.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

August 8.

A Maori woman was found dead on the beach on Sunday. She had a tremendous wound on the face, and all her

clothing had been stripped, excepting her boots. She had just drawn a considerable sum of money as her share of a land purchase. At the Coroner's Inquest, a verdict of violent death was returned.

Dr. Howell, a medical practitioner from Coromandel, comes to Gisborne next week, when he commences to practice.

(PRESS AGENCY.)

AUCKLAND.

August 7.

News received from the shore, near North Cape, states that the whole of the beach is strewn with wreckage for miles; oranges by thousands. Doubts still exist as to the identity of the wrecked vessel. It is supposed to be from the South Sea Islands. Ex-Governor Ferguson's yacht Blanche is some weeks overdue from the Islands.

August 8.

Sailed—Wanaka, at 5 p.m. Passengers for Napier—Mrs Von Temy and family, Mrs Bishop, Messrs Beaver, Jobbens, Jackson, and Parker. For Gisborne—Mrs Miller and family, Miss Lawrence, and Mr Nolan.

WELLINGTON.

August 8.

Arrived—Glenlyon, ship, from London, 97 days out. No passengers. She has a full cargo consigned to the New Zealand Shipping Company. She had a good passage to the Cape, but met afterwards unsettled and stormy weather.

August 9.

A second theatre was opened last night at Te Aro flat by Margetts and Company. The house was crowded.

NELSON.

August 8.

A telegram to the Mail from Motueka re Queen Bee, says:—"The passengers were still aboard when the boat left, it being too dark to find the landing place. There appeared to be no chance of saving the vessel, her back being broken, and she is bumping heavily."

August 9.

The steamer Lady Barkly returned at eight o'clock last night with a boat, in which the mate of the Queen Bee came to Motueka, and the following passengers, who left the wreck in a lifeboat with three A.B.'s and one ordinary seaman:—Mr and Mrs Gibbs and infant, Misses Cheel (2), Mrs Pearce, and Mrs Saunders. They report that the ship made the New Zealand coast on Thursday. She had dirty weather to Cape Farewell, and that on Monday night she was abreast of the light, rounded to, and at midnight struck, the light bearing N.W., and shewing red. It was then near low water, and heavy seas at once commenced to break over her, and she bumped so heavily the men could scarcely keep their legs. The mate and four men left for Motueka as reported at six.

The missing passengers and crew left the ship, with the captain and officers and two passengers, Hellard and Beckett, in the gig. The lifeboat, with the passengers named above, and the cutter, with Dr and Mrs Maunsell and two children, Misses Fosbery (2), Mr Gibbs and five of Mr Gibbs' children, Messrs White and Shartell, Mrs Cheel and son, one A.B., and three ordinary seamen. The lifeboat was much damaged in launching, and while knocking off Awaroa, was picked up by the schooner Merlin, and shortly after transferred to the Lady Barkly, which was returning from the wreck. The captain of the Lady Barkly says the ship is completely submerged, except a portion of the starboard quarter. Had she been 200 yards further out she would have cleared the spit end.

Mrs Gibbs is in a terrible state of mind, as a number of her family are in the missing boats, for which the Lyttelton and Lady Barkly are now searching, the latter having gone out again. The lifeboat was in such a damaged state that she was abandoned.

LATER.

There is no tidings yet of the missing boats. The Lyttelton and Lady Barkly are still out searching, and very great anxiety is felt here. By direction of Lloyd's agent the Queen Bee will be sold by auction to-morrow morning.

PARLIAMENTARY.

WELLINGTON.

THE LAW OF COPYRIGHT.

August 8.

In the House yesterday, Captain Russell, in asking whether the Government will introduce or support during the present session a Bill to protect copyrights in the works of fine art, hoped a measure would be introduced similar to

the one in England. He believed it would be self-supporting from fees received. If the Government had no intention to introduce such a measure, he would bring in one himself, to which Mr Travers had looked over the draft.

Mr Whitaker said the Government had no intention to introduce such a Bill, but would assist Captain Russell's private Bill.

PARCELS BY POST.

Captain Russell asked, whether the Government will initiate a system of parcel by post.

Mr McLean said he was aware the system had been very useful, and would take the matter into consideration during the recess.

DEBATE ON NATIVE LANDS

BILL.

Mr Whitaker in a long speech moved the second reading of the Native Land's Bill.

He was followed by Dr. Wallis and Karaitiana, who both vehemently opposed the Bill.

The House then adjourned and resumed at 7.30.

AMENDMENT MOVED BY MR. BALLANCE.

Mr Ballance's defection to the Opposition ranks on the Native Lands Bill, has been expected several days. His speech after the adjournment in opposition to the Bill was well delivered, able, and statesmanlike. He concluded by moving an amendment, that the Bill was unsatisfactory, and should be withdrawn in order to render it more in conformity with the wishes of the House. Also, that any measure introduced should encourage bona fide settlement on limited areas.

A SHELL IN THE MINISTER-
IALIST CAMP.

This was a perfect shell in the Ministerialist camp.

The amendment not being expected.

Mr. Whitaker turned as red as a turkey cock, and Ministers appeared deeply affected.

Mr. Travers delivered a capital speech against the Bill, but lost some notes, and occasionally made painful pauses, while referring to extracts. He created amusement by introducing extracts from native reports with, and said, "Sir,—What does Mr. Locke say." When he could not find what Mr. Locke said, and had to pass him, and the same with others. He passed eulogiums on the memory of Sir Donald McLean, who contributed more than any other man to keep Ministers in office,—and used the knowledge of native affairs for the good of both races. But in a little while, or e'er those shoes were old with which his colleagues followed his poor body to the grave, they brought forward a measure to flood the North Island with bloodshed. He criticised the land purchase operations, and said only 1,700,000 acres had been acquired for £550,000. He spoke of land rings even inside the House. He criticised the Bill in a incisive speech, as dangerous to the peace of the country.

APPEARANCE OF THE HOUSE.

After Mr. Travers finished, there was a long pause ensued. Everybody expected the Government to put up speakers to defend the Bill but there was no response. Mr. Reid was deeply absorbed in reading a Parliamentary Paper. Mr McLean was looking disconsolate, Mr Whitaker dejected, and Major Atkinson savage, and Mr. Fox vigilant and apparently only restrained from rushing into the fray but for a prudent regard for the Local Option Bill.

The Opposition whips were active,

Hoani Nahe got up and condemned the Bill, and said the Maoris would rather have their lands taken by the Turks and Russians.

Another long pause.

Loud cries for the Government.

Mr. Taiaroa said, if the Bill was carried the Maoris had better set up a flag of their own and call in aid from some foreign power.

Ministers were putting their heads together,—when Mr Stout deplored the condition of the Government in not being able to find a solitary supporter of the Bill. They seemed to be a most helpless lot.

GOVERNMENT REPLY.

Mr Reid, in a husky voice, attempted to reply, but had to confess his ignorance of the Bill. He generally spoke in favor of the suggestions of Mr Bunny, who, in opposing the Bill, recommended that the Government conduct the surveys, and then put up the land to auction with the consent of the native owners, the cost of survey being deducted from the proceeds.

The Speaker here left the chair for half-an-hour.

WARM DEBATE.

When the House resumed at half-past

ten, Mr Bunny said he would vote for Mr Ballance's amendment.

Mr Hislop taunted the Government with the adopting of Opposition opinions. He challenged them to declare how they would regard the amendment. He said the Bill would be another Slaughter House Bill to the Ministry. Would the Government throw the entire responsibility on Mr Whitaker, and thus affirm the rumours that dissensions existed in the Ministry.

MR. REES AND MR. ORMOND.

Mr Rees made another all-round attack. He was very warm on Mr. Ormond, and charged him with having got clause 4 inserted in the Bill to continue clauses 12 and 14 of the Act of 1869, so as to place ten natives, whose names were inserted originally as trustees, on an equality with larger owners, and thus protect Mr Ormond's purchases. [Mr Ormond, during Rees's attack, sat something like a little Jack Horner, biting his nails.] He charged Mr Ormond with being a party to getting natives to sign blank sheets of parchment, in which the particulars afterwards were inserted, and instanced Karaitiana's case. The natives should be protected from plunderers. He had been told the Government supporters would vote for this Bill, no matter what arguments were adduced. He solemnly appealed to the Middle Island members to reject the Bill, and avert a war. They ought not so go into the lobby and vote like sheep.

Mr Macfarlane thought these words ought to be taken down.

The Speaker asked if it was the wish of the House.

Loud cries of "No."

The Speaker said he thought nothing in the words would warrant their being taken down.

Mr Macfarlane bowed with mock dignity to Mr Rees, and left the House.

Mr Rees spoke of Macfarlane's tender conscience and welcomed it as a good sign. He concluded by advocating the sale of land in small blocks for *bona fide* settlement.

Mr Kelly (Taranaki) moved the adjournment.

Mr J. C. Brown urged a division.

The debate was adjourned at a quarter to twelve until Friday.

The House then adjourned.

The Government, meantime, will have an opportunity of working up replies, and possibly gaining the votes of some waverers.

IMMENSE PETITIONS.

Mr Fox has presented petitions in favor of the Local Option Bill from 4,500 Auckland people, and the same number of others from various parts of the colony; also, a petition signed by the Rev Peter Mason on behalf of the Presbytery; and also petitions from Kaikoura, Rangiora, and the Grey Valley. The aggregate signatures are about 10,000.

Mr Fox intimated when the second reading of the Bill comes on, he would ask for its postponement until to-morrow.

WILSON'S PETITION.

The Wilson-Rogan report, not having been laid on the table, Colonel Whitmore will move for the original document to-day.

It is suspected Dr. Pollen is purposely delaying the report until a late period of the session.

The representatives at the Municipal Conference waited on the Premier to-day, who promised to consider their recommendations.

The Premier said deductions from the subsidies had been more than necessary. The expenses had not been so great as expected, the balance would be refunded to the Municipalities.

NATIVE PETITION AGAINST LAND COURT BILL.

August 9.

In the House yesterday, Mr Karaitiana presented a petition from Renata Kawepo and 1022 others against the Native Lands Court Bill; also, a petition from 222 natives of Hawaiki against the Bill.

DEBATE ON NAPIER ENDOWMENT BILL.

Mr Sutton moved the second reading of the Napier Endowment Bill. The land was an endowment of only two acres, and lay close on a road. In 1860 the land was granted for the use and endowment of the Napier Harbor Board, but in 1870 a Bill was passed which left this piece out. It was a long narrow piece of land which ought to be granted to the Municipality if of no use to any other body.

Mr Bowen hoped the hon. member would agree to adjourn the second reading, as the matter was in dispute in Napier.

Mr Sutton suggested that the Bill be read a second time and committed, which was opposed.

The Speaker said that the Bill was an all important one. It was proposed to transfer land from one body to another, therefore it should be carefully considered.

Mr Gisborne raised the question as to whether the Bill should not be properly brought down by message from the Governor.

The Speaker said it was not necessary. Mr. Sheehan moved an adjournment of the debate for a fortnight. He thought there was a mistake in the Bill, and would shew, from papers in his possession, that the Bill as it stands will not effect the proposed object.

Mr. Sutton suggested that the second reading be adjourned for a week—a fortnight was rather long.

Mr. Gisborne said, if the land was not Crown land, it must be private property, and the Harbor Board ought to have proper notice in order to represent their case. He suggested that the Bill be referred to the Committee on Private Bills.

Captain Russell said he had received a telegram from the Harbor Board urging him to oppose the Bill. He was informed that the land was originally vested in the Harbor Board, but owing to a change in the railway that piece had been excluded. He would support Mr. Sheehan's amendment.

Mr. Sheehan considered a fortnight's adjournment not unreasonable. He would support the Bill if found fair and reasonable. He believed the session would be a long one, and there would be plenty of time to consider it.

The Speaker said he would look into the Bill with a view of seeing whether it was necessary to refer it to the Private Bills Committee.

Mr. Sutton moved that the Bill be adjourned for a week, but Mr. Sheehan's motion was carried on the voices.

CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS BILL IN COMMITTEE.

The House was all last night in Committee on the Charitable Institutions Bill. The whole afternoon and evening sittings were practically wasted.

Clauses one and two were passed without amendment.

The Committee stuck at clause three.

Sir G. Grey fired off the first shot by stating that, under the third clause, there was nothing to prevent fifty Mormons sending £50 from Utah, and compelling the State to aid them to found an institution for destitute girls. He characterised the clause as under the denominational system.

The Hon. Donald Reid, in charge of the Bill, was subjected to a running fire from all sides. He appeared not well up in the Bill.

Mr Wakefield "chaffed" Mr Reid on giving a totally different interpretation of the Bill from that given by the Attorney-General. He wondered how any two Ministers could meet each other anywhere without blushing.

MR WHITAKER SENT FOR.

Mr Reid^d sent in a hurry for Mr Whitaker, who rushed to the rescue. He made a slashing speech in reply to the attacks on the Bill. He said Ministers were fortunate in being able to blush. Mr Wakefield could not raise a blush if his life depended on it.

Mr Gisborne thought the clause should be recast, and moved the Committee report progress. He argued the Bill would enable any fifty persons, becoming managers, to have a hospital endowment vested in them.

Mr. Rees pointed out that while Mr. Reid said the Bill would deal with the existing voluntary institutions, Mr. Whitaker afterwards said everybody who took this view must be a lunatic. Therefore Mr. Reid must be a lunatic, on Mr. Whitaker's own shewing. Mr. Rees compared Ministers to a patent revolving gun, which fired amongst friends and foes alike.

Mr. Sheehan chaffed Mr. McLean for saying, the Dunedin Hospital only thrived when a man with a broken leg became an inmate. He recommended the Ministry to take in some one with a broken leg. One of the Mayors at the Conference, formerly a member of the House, who voted for abolition, had said at the banquet that the Government had not treated them well. The fact was he did not get thirty pieces of silver. It was a pity he did not follow the example of Judas Iscariot, after he got the thirty pieces. He compared the Ministry to the Russians in danger of being cut off from their base of supplies.

Mr. J. E. Brown moved that the Speaker leave the chair.

On a division, the result was ayes, 24; noes, 37.

The Canterbury members walked into the lobby with the Government.

THE GOVERNMENT CHALLENGED.

Sir G. Grey challenged the Govern-

ment to declare whether they would stand or fall by the denominational principle.

Mr. Reid said if the Government could not secure managers, it would not be denominational.

Mr. Gisborne proposed an amendment, making the clause apply to institutions partly supported voluntarily, and partly by public funds.

After a long debate, progress was reported, and the House adjourned at 12.10.

Latest Political News.

WELLINGTON.

August 8.

It is reported that Mr G. E. Barton, the barrister, has intimated to the Government his intention to apply for a Parliamentary inquiry into the conduct of Chief Justice Prendergast. The charges are of undisguised hostility to Mr Barton, as a barrister, and going out of his way to injure and insult the firm of Barton and Fitzherbert. Some of the accusations are of a very serious character.

The Ministry this morning appealed to Mr Ballance to withdraw his amendment, and permit the Native Lands Bill to be read a second time. Ministers promise to introduce in Committee clauses in the direction suggested by amendment.

Mr Ballance is favorably disposed if the Government give a direct assurance in the House.

The whips, meantime, are hard at work.

Ministers have also appealed to Mr Woolcock to accept an amendment, or withdraw his resolution, but he refuses.

Ministers have been in Cabinet over the situation all day.

It is generally believed there is a majority against the Government on the Land Court Bill.

August 9.

Our special correspondent interviewed Mr Ballance, and learned that he is determined to press his amendment on the Native Land Courts Bill to a division. He will not accept the proposed compromise that the Government will introduce liberal amendments in Committee. Mr Ballance thinks the Bill incapable of amendment.

The Government must withdraw the Bill, and draft an entirely new one.

This is just what the Government will not do if it can possibly effect any compromise, and hold their seats.

It is stated in well-informed circles that if the Bill passed, agents are ready to spread themselves over the North Island in the interest of the land-sharks. It is rumored that a regular speculative campaign is prepared. The big land jobbers are fortunately excluded from the lobbies, and are waiting cap in hand without, but many honorable land-sharks are doing the business within the charmed circle.

The division on Mr Ballance's amendment is expected to be close. Those who saw Ministers to-day think they feel their position shaky.

Reliable informants give the following clear statement of Mr. Fitzherbert's position:—First, he cannot, consistently with traditional dignity to the Speakership, resign so early and throw himself into the arms of the Opposition; second, he is getting too old and fond of his ease; third, the only unsatisfied aspiration is the Agent-Generalship; fourth, if he consents to take the lead it must be proved to him that the Opposition has a majority and licked into shape, and it would be with an object of reconstruction at the end of the session, and retiring into the Agent-Generalship.

There is a strong feeling in influential circles if a new Ministry is formed this session, it should be an entirely new Ministry. The old Tight Barnacles must no longer oracularly rule the roast.

SCEPTICISM AND FREE THOUGHT.

Sir,—A short time since, I noticed that some observations fell from Mr Sidey concerning the encouragement afforded by the Press to scepticism and free thought; the reverend gentleman also alluded in bitter terms to the falling away of certain of his congregation, and to their hankering after strange gods. This, of course, is very much to be deplored; but may I be permitted to ask, is it to be wondered at? The Presbyterian Church is not a church of charity; its hard Calvinistic doctrines are calculated to frighten all those Christians whose bumps of self-veneration are feebly developed. The Rev D. Macrae, of the Presbyterian Church, Gourock, has been one of the first to discover that the god of the Church to which he belongs is nothing more nor less than a Moloch, who de-

lights in the sufferings of the creatures he has made; and Mr Macrae has fluttered the Elders of the Presbytery in their dovecoots to some purpose. Speaking of the "Confession" of the Church, he says:—

The Confession teaches that God, for His own glory, has predestinated some men to be saved, but that all the rest of mankind He has predestinated to damnation and everlasting torment in hell.

It teaches that God has absolutely and unchangeably fixed the very number, so that not one of them (the non-elect) can be brought over to the ranks of the saved, preach to them and pray for them as you will.

It teaches that none are redeemed by Christ but the elect only.

It teaches that the rest of mankind are not only unable to believe in Christ, and beyond his power to redeem, but are brought into the world utterly unable to help themselves.

It teaches that God hardens them, withholding the grace by which they might have been enlightened in their understandings and wrought upon in their hearts.

It teaches that, by reason of the sin of Adam, apart from any fault of their own, they come into the world wholly defiled in all the faculties of soul and body, utterly indisposed, disabled, and opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil.

It teaches that because of this sin, which they could not and cannot help, they are bound helplessly over to the wrath of God and the curse of the law, and so made subject to spiritual, temporal, and eternal death.

It teaches that even in heathen lands, where they have never heard, and therefore never had an opportunity of accepting the Gospel, they cannot be saved, no matter how earnestly they may frame their lives according to the light of nature, or the laws of that religion which they profess.

It teaches that if they do wrong it is a sin, and they are damned all the same. If they turn to the one hand, it is bad; if they turn to the other, it is worse. If they obey the law of God, it is sin; if they disobey, it is worse than sin.

And after death, according to our Standard, they are all cast into hell, there to endure for ever and ever unspeakable torments of soul and body as long as a God Himself shall exist.

It teaches that of the countless myriads who have died in infancy, only the elect are saved.

For the non-elect, young and old, it has but the fate of unending and unspeakable torments of hell."

There is the teaching of a religion of *love* specially adapted to those sublime beings; who,

Floating secure upon their planks of grace,

chuckle at the idea of the surrounding world drifting on to "damnation and everlasting torment in hell."

What wonder that congregations fall away, and that newspapers encourage free thought.—I am, &c.,

AN EX-PRESBYTERIAN.

Napier, 28 July, 1877.

THE LOCAL OPTION BILL.

Sir—Your leading article of Saturday last contains the following statement:—"We should mention that every man of twenty-one years, and every girl of eighteen summers, shall be an adult for the purposes of this Local Option Act."

I cannot easily understand how you could fall into such an error if, as you say, you wrote with a copy of the Bill before you. The fourth clause is surely plain enough:—"Every man and woman of the age of twenty-one years shall be an adult for the purposes of this Act." Further, you will find that, under the thirteenth clause, any "girl of eighteen summers" who should attempt to record a vote under the Act, would be liable to imprisonment for any period not exceeding six months.

It is only due to your readers that you should exercise reasonable care in preparing abstracts of public documents, the originals being in the hands of only a few, while the newspapers are read by all.—I am, &c.,

R. COUPLAND HARDING.

Napier, 3th August, 1877.

[We have seen a copy of the Local Option Bill that was sent to Mr. Harding; our own copy, received from the Government Printer, is now before us. The two differ. We would ask, is it possible that the contemptible dodge has been resorted to of distributing one Bill for the public, and another Bill for the House, both purporting to be the same? It looks uncommonly like it.—Ed. W.M.]

A sad story from New York is thus referred to by "Atlas" in the World:—Many of my readers will remember the unfortunate actor, Walter Montgomery, who shot himself on his wedding-day a few years ago. It appears that his widow married again, after an interval. Her husband deserted her; and I now learn that she has died in a hospital in New York, after passing through almost every conceivable stage of suffering and degradation short of crime.

Shipping Intelligence. FORT A HURIRI.

ARRIVALS.

- August. 2-Wanaka, s.s., from Wellington and Southern Ports. Passengers-Mesdames Harrison, Hodge, and Blair, Miss Blair, Messrs Reardon, Blair, Beal, Dickson, Levien, Blackmore, several steerage, and a few for the north. 4-Southern Cross, s.s., from Auckland. Passengers-Mr and Mrs Ford and 2 children, Mrs McCrea, Messrs. Banks and several in the steerage. 5-Jane Douglas, s.s., from Auckland via Gisborne. Passengers-Mr and Mrs Mills, Miss Hadden, and Mr M'Leod. 6-Fairy, s.s., from Moengiangi. 7-Orpheus, schooner, from Mercury Bay. 7-Result, s.s., from Wairoa via Mohaka. Passengers-4 natives. 7-Mania, p.s., from Wairoa. Passengers-Miss Walsh, Messrs. Boyd, Carter, and Ingram. 7-Mary Wadley, three-masted schooner, from Hobartown. 8-Opotiki, schooner, from Poverty Bay. 8-Storm Bird, s.s., from Wellington. Passengers-One lady and Mr Parker. 8-Columbia, schooner, from Lyttelton. 8-Venus, ketch, from Mercury Bay. 9-Kiwi, s.s., from Wellington via Castle Point. Passengers-Miss Prattley, Messrs Cable, Burton, Carr, Marten, Sullivan, and 10 steerage. 9-Janet, ketch, from Lyttelton.

DEPARTURES

- August. 3-Storm Bird, s.s., for Wellington. Passengers-Messrs Rombak, Samuels, Smith, Higgins, Mann, and 3 steerage. 3-Wanaka, s.s., for Northern Ports. Passengers-Miss Harkis (2), Miss Tunks, Miss Williams, Mr P. Gow, Mr Mann, Mrs Naylor, Mr Naylor, Mrs Britten and 2 children, Mr Holmes, Mr Bergen, Mr Fair, Mr Webb, Miss Bannister, Miss Bourke, Hapi, Amelia, Pera, Mr Holmes, Mr Hartshorn, Mrs Harrison, Messrs. Ruddy, Kirk, Woon, Raine, Gordon, Harris, Spencer, Miss Bright, Mr and Mrs Ellis and 3 children. 5-Mania, p.s., for Wairoa. 5-Result, s.s., for Mohaka and Wairoa. 6-Southern Cross, s.s., for the Thames and Auckland. Passengers-Messrs Corcoran, Stread (2), Meyers, and one steerage. 7-Mary Ann Hudson, ketch, for Mohaka. 8-Jane Douglas, s.s., for Poverty Bay. Passengers-Messrs Locke, Tucker, Loughran, 2 natives, and 2 children.

The s.s. Storm Bird took in a full cargo of wool, tallow, and sheepskins, and sailed for Wellington, at 11.30 a.m. on Friday. The s.s. Jane Douglas, Captain Fraser, returned from Auckland and Gisborne on Sunday morning early. During her stay in Auckland she has been thoroughly cleaned and newly painted, has had her shaft and propeller examined, and new bushes fixed. She brought a full cargo to Gisborne, and about 10 tons for Napier. Capt. Fraser reports the Wanaka and Pretty Jane as having left Poverty Bay for Auckland at noon on Saturday. The steamers Mania and Result both left early on Sunday morning, the former for Wairoa, and the latter for Mohaka and Wairoa. Both had full cargoes, but not many passengers in either steamer. Captain Robert Baxter is at present in command of the Result, during Captain William Baxter's indisposition. The s.s. Southern Cross is under command of Capt. Carey this trip, Capt. Holmes having been obliged to remain in Auckland through indisposition. There is a channel forming on the east side of the bar and there was on Saturday five feet of water on it. The s.s. Southern Cross, Capt. Carey, steamed out of the harbor about 1 p.m. on Monday. She was detained a short time in the Bay to enable the Sir Donald to take out a load of sheep, as the Pilot deemed it better than shipping them at the wharf, there not being sufficient water on the westward side of the bar. The s.s. Fairy, Capt. Campbell, was enabled to discharge the whole of her cargo this trip on the Coast. The three-masted schooner Mary Wadley, Captain Balle, arrived at the anchorage on Tuesday, having been 18 days on the passage from Hobartown. Her cargo consists of hardwood, timber, palings, jam, and fruit, and comes consigned to Mr. J. H. Vautier. The steamers Mania and Result both returned from Wairoa on Tuesday, with full cargoes of maize. The latter steamer came straight inside about 8 p.m. on Tuesday, and the Mania waited outside till Wednesday. We notice Mr Light is no longer engineer of the Mania. This will be much regretted by the constant travellers in this steamer, as by his kind disposition and urbanity of manner he has secured the principal number of passengers. He has been succeeded by Mr Jameson, late of the Result, and Mr Nasmith, Junr., is now in the Result. The schooner Orpheus arrived on Tuesday with a cargo of sawn timber from Mercury

Bay. She being two days on the passage up, and three days coming to Napier. The schooner Opotiki, Capt. W Harris, arrived in the bay about noon on Wednesday from Poverty Bay. The s.s. Storm Bird, Capt. Doile, arrived at the wharf about 3 on Wednesday, having made the passage from Wellington in 24 hours. She encountered a very severe hail storm when between Cape Turnagain and the Kidnappers. She had a tolerably good cargo, but only two passengers. The s.s. Kiwi, arrived in the bay early on Thursday. She called at Castle Point and landed cargo and passengers. She has about 60 tons of cargo for this port, and about 16 passengers. Captain Campbell reports fine weather on the passage up. The ketch Venus has a cargo of timber from Mercury Bay. The schooner Columbia has a cargo of oats for Mr Vautier. She left Lyttelton the same day as the ketch Janet, and beat her 24 hours on the run. We hear that Capt. Fairchild has assumed command of the Government steamer Stella, the Hinemoa having been laid up, this is to be regretted as it puts Capt. Bendall out of a command. Captain Kennedy is in temporary command of the s.s. Hawea, and it is rumoured in maritime circles that probably Captain Wheeler will be appointed Harbor Master at Nelson vice Captain Cross, who is about to resign. The Sir Donald did not tow in the Mary Wadley on Wednesday on account of the heavy wind that blew at the proper time of the tide. She however managed to tow in the schooner Opotiki and ketch Venus, after casting off the Opotiki's tow line when in mid-channel, the Sir Donald nearly fouled the ferry boat that was crossing the harbour containing, besides the ferry man, two passengers and having two horses swimming astern. At one time a collision seemed almost inevitable, and was only prevented by the ferryman going astern out of the steamer's way, in our opinion the captain of the Sir Donald ought to have steered his steamer round to the westward, which would have prevented his running almost stern on to the breastwork. Fortunately not much damage has been done to the Sir Donald, we however noticed the carpenters repairing damage to her bow on Thursday. The passengers in the ferry boat had a very narrow escape of being run down. The principal consignees of the cargo in the Queen Bee were Messrs. Kinross, Stuart, Watt, Newton, Neale & Close, and Tuxford besides a few private packages. It appears to be pretty generally known, says the Taranaki Herald, that the U.S.S. Company have dispensed with the services of Captain Lloyd, late of the s.s. Wellington. No one, we understand, has been appointed in his place, as the Wellington, for a time at least, is to be laid up. It is to be hoped the Company does not contemplate permanently reducing the number of steamers on this line. It appears (says the Wellington Post) that in the account given of the late great ocean race from New Zealand to England, only the two of the competing vessels which sailed from Lyttelton were noticed, viz., the Crusader, (which was alleged to have made the run Home in 65 days, thus eclipsing a previous year), and the Rangitikei. It seems now, however, that the Crusader in reality was 67 days from land to land, and 70 from port to port; whereas her rival, the Rangitikei (which had made the outward voyage in 67 and 70 days respectively), took 80 days on this occasion, starting a day after the Crusader. But the Otaki, which left Port Chalmers a day after the Crusader left Lyttelton, was forgotten, and she proves to have beaten both the others by reaching the English Channel in 63 days from New Zealand, and arriving in port on the same day as the Crusader. Thus the famous run of the Oliver Lang in 1857 of 66 days land to land, and 68 days port to port, is even yet not beaten. The quickest passages by sailing vessels between Melbourne and London were, we believe, 59 days out by the Thermopylae, and 67 days Home by the Lightning.

SUPPOSED WRECK OF THE QUEEN BEE. We have been kindly favored by Mr Kinross with a perusal of a telegram received on Wednesday by him from the Agents of the Queen Bee at Nelson, in which it is stated that it is feared the Queen Bee is ashore at the Farewell Spit, Nelson. A large portion of the vessel's cargo is consigned to Napier. Since the above was in type, we have received the following from the Press Agency:—On Tuesday Edwards and Co. received the following telegram from Motueka:—"The ship Queen Bee struck the Farewell Spit last night. She had ten feet of water in her hold when we left. Send assistance immediately." No further particulars are yet known. The steamers Lyttelton and Lady Barkley were at once despatched to the assistance of the Queen Bee. She has thirty passengers, and a large cargo for Nelson.

ALLEGED MURDER OF A SHIP CAPTAIN. An extraordinary rumor gained in Melbourne to the effect that foul play had taken place recently on board the British ship Alumbagh, lately lying at Queenscliff. The former commander of the vessel, the late

Captain Pratt, is the alleged victim, and it is further stated that Captain James Hogg, the succeeding master, was also in danger of losing his life. The Alumbagh, under the command of Captain Pratt, arrived at Adelaide on the 16th of March last, with a large number of emigrants from London. In charge of the same master, she sailed on the 10th May for Newcastle, and during this voyage Captain Pratt died and was buried at sea. The duty of managing the vessel then devolved upon the chief officer, Frederick Abington, who brought her to Newcastle on the 5th of June. It was said the deceased captain had been drinking rather freely, and that this had resulted in or facilitated his death. Captain Hogg was sent on from Adelaide to fill the vacant post, and on the 3rd July the Alumbagh left Newcastle with a cargo of coals for India. On Saturday last, however, she put in at Queenscliff for the purpose of landing Captain Hogg, who, it was alleged, was not in a fit state for retaining command. Whilst the ship was lying at Queenscliff, until matters might be arranged by Messrs Holmes, White, and Co., the Melbourne agents of the owners, the Geelong police received a report that Capt. Pratt had been poisoned by his drink having been drugged, and that Captain Hogg had been tampered with in a similar manner. Messrs Holmes, White, and Co., being very desirous of having the matter thoroughly sifted, have afforded the detectives every facility in their power for doing so. They brought about an interview between Capt. Hogg, Abington (the chief officer), and Detective Kennedy, at their office in William street. Captain Hogg said he had no charge to lay against any one, and admitted that he himself had been in fault. Captain Hogg and Abington both sent in their resignations, and Captain F. Moore, formerly of the A. S. N. Company, was appointed to the command of the vessel, which the police did not feel warranted in further detaining.

Commercial.

W O O L .

June 8, 1877. DURING the past week or so, there has been a rather brisker tone, owing mainly to demand for combing merino wools for France, but it is questionable if it will last. Cross-breds still keep very low, though this past week news from Bradford has been rather more cheerful. The result of the Series just brought to a close, is as follows—Inferior, and average greasy, about level with closing prices of last sales; fleece, washed, about 1d per lb., and cross-bred, 1 1/4d per lb. lower. For next Series, to commence early in August, about 200,000 bales have already arrived, and it is likely that 100,000 more will arrive in time, and to which 60,000 of withdrawals from the previous Series, and that just over which brings the total available for August Sales up to a high figure. If peace is settled in the meantime, the question will bear a different aspect, for present values are moderate, and although the woolen trade of Europe taken as a whole, is not just now in a very flourishing state, still many branches of it only require the stimulus which peace would give to commerce generally, to gain fresh life.

MURRAY, COMMON & CO.

POST OFFICE NOTICE.

MAILS CLOSE

For Wellington, Southern Provinces, and Australian Colonies, per Wanaka, on Saturday, at 10 a.m. For the United Kingdom, Continent of Europe, &c., via Suez and Brindisi, by every opportunity to Wellington, where the mails close on the 24th instant. For Fiji, Sandwich Islands, America, United Kingdom, Continent of Europe, West Indies, via San Francisco, per Rotorua, on Saturday, 25th instant, at 9 p.m. Money Orders and Registered Letters will close at 5 p.m. Book Packets and Newspapers at 8 p.m. on 25th instant. For the unmentioned places every Monday, and Thursday, at 5.30 a.m.—Clive, Hastings, Havelock, Te Aute, Kaikora, Waipawa, Waipukurau, Danewirk, Norsewood, Tahourite, Woodville, Foxton, Palmerston, Wanganui, Taranaki, Wellington and Southern Provinces, &c., Wallingford, Porangahau, Waiuui, and Castle Point. On the other days of the week, mails close as usual, at 6.30 a.m. J. GRUBB, Chief Postmaster.

BIRTH.

MURROW.—At Napier, on August 3rd, the wife of W. H. Murrow, of a son.

MARRIAGES.

MILLER—EDSER.—At Napier, on 28th July, R. M. Miller, late Lieut. 33rd (Duke of Wellington's) Regiment, to Mary J., youngest daughter of Mr. A. Edser. VILLERS—M'KAIN.—At Petane, on the 2nd August, at the residence of the bride's mother, by the Rev. Father Reigner, Mr. Charles Villiers, of Petane, to Robina, fourth daughter of the late Mr. James Buchanan M'Kain.

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT.

J. A. S.—(1) The verb "to grab" comes from the Danish *Greb*, meaning to seize suddenly. Yankee Grab is a game that is played by two or more persons with dice. There is also a game of cards called Grab. (2) We cannot give the rules of either game. (3) You had better apply either to the Town Clerk or to the Secretary of the Harbor Board.

CHRONOLOGICAL MEMORANDA.

FROM AUGUST 12 TO AUGUST 18, 1877.

PHASES OF THE MOON. First Quarter.....16th August.

Week Day and month	Anniversaries, &c.	Sun				High Water	
		R.	S.	A.M.	P.M.		
12 S	11th-Sun. a. Trinity	7	1	5	9	8	10
13 M		7	0	5	10	8	47
14 T	Casabon b., 1599	6	58	5	10	9	38
15 W	Assumption B. V. Mary	6	58	5	12	10	30
16 T	B. Aram ex., 1769	6	55	5	14	11	28
17 F	Frede the G. d., 1786	6	53	5	15		6
18 S	Earl Russell b., 1792	6	51	5	16	1	0

TO THE RATEPAYERS IN THE WAIPUKURAU RIDING OF THE COUNTY OF WAIPAWA.

GENTLEMEN—Altho' unsuccessful, it would be ungrateful in me not to return my best thanks to the large number of Ratepayers, who have so heartily, and at such inconvenience, supported my Candidature for the seat in the Council, on the four occasions when the election was contested. More especially are my warmest acknowledgments due for the votes given to me at the last election, when I had the majority both at Waipukurau and at Ashley Clinton, and was only defeated by the influences brought to bear against me at Ongā Ongā; the result of the whole election being the small number of Eleven votes against me. It is a satisfaction to me, greater than I can well express, that the Poll showed unmistakably that I enjoy the confidence of a large majority of the Ratepayers, (there being about 90 for me, and 69 against me,) and that I have been defeated solely by the cumulative votes of a few large landowners who combined against me. That satisfaction is the greater, because it proves that, though personally unknown to almost all the Small Settlers, who have been planted on the wild spurs of the Ruahine, there to struggle for existence, without any helping hand to smooth their first attempts at settlement, the principles announced in my address have met with strong approval; and that too in spite of the misrepresentations, which were so industriously disseminated. To the Ratepayers residing in the vicinity of Waipukurau, who know me intimately, and from whom I experienced an almost unanimous support, I feel deeply grateful for this mark of their continued goodwill and confidence, in addition to the many others which, I am proud to say, I am constantly receiving at their hands. Had I been so inclined it would have been as easy to upset this last election as the others, but I felt it would be causing too much expense and trouble to the Ratepayers to ask them to come to the Poll a fifth time. I hope that any temporary ill-feeling which may have arisen in the course of this unusually protracted contest will disappear without leaving any traces behind. In conclusion I venture to express my entire conviction that the views which I hold as to the taxation of the more favored localities in the County for the purpose of extending as far as possible, the same advantages to the outlying districts, are bound to succeed, in spite of all interested opposition. I remain, Gentlemen, Your Obedient Servant, H. R. RUSSELL.

JOHN M'VAY, SADDLER & HARNESSMAKER. Hastings-street.

The Cheapest House in the Trade. H. MONTEITH, Stock, Land Estate, and General Commission Agent, Waipukurau. Goods Stored and Forwarded. Offices and Stores: Near the Railway Station. Mess will be celebrated by the Rev. F. Reigner next Sunday, 12th inst., in the School-room, Havelock, at 11 a.m.

BOYLAN AND CO.,

HASTINGS-STREET, NAPIER.

RESPECTFULLY invites the attention of the public and especially to COUNTRY STORE-KEEPERS, to their large assortment of NEW GOODS—

Builders' Ironmongery—

WIRE and EW BANK'S NAILS. Rim and Mortice Locks, Hinges, Screws, Augers, Adzes. PLANES, Levels, Gauges, Floor Cramps, Chisels, Gouges, Axes, Hatches, Hammers, Gimblets, Spokeshafts, Saws, (Pit and Crosscut, Hand, Tenon, and Compass), Door Springs, Sash Weights, Lines, and Pulleys, &c.

Brass Foundry—

Cornic Rings and Pool Ends, Curtain Bands and Hooks, Cornice and Window Brackets, Bolts, Sash, Table, and Case-ment Fasteners, Hinges, Blind Furniture Beer, Bottling, and Range Cocks, &c.

Agricultural Implements—

Hornsby's and Ramsons' 1 and 2 Wheel Ploughs, Harrow's Winnowing Machines, (Horse Powers) Wheat Mills, Corn Shellers, CHAFF CUTTERS, (hand and horse power), Coil, Plough, Cart and Dog CHAINS, Hames, Grindstone, Draining and Grafting Tools, Hedge, Pruning and Sheep Shears, Scythes, Sickles, Reap Hooks, Maul Rings, Wedges, Fencing Wire, Steel-yards, GALVANISED WIRE NETTING, $\frac{1}{2}$ to 2in. Mesh, Saddles, Bridles, Girths, Spurs, &c.

B.B.H. Bar and Rod Iron—

Boiler Plate, Sheet Iron (black and galvanised), Anvils, Vices, Spring, Shear, Cast, and Blisters STEEL, Horse Nails, Files and Rasps, Portable Forges, Bel-lows, Dray, and Wuggy Axles, Iron Pipe, HYDRAULIC WOOL PRESS.

Galvanised Corrugated Iron

Q.G. and $\frac{1}{2}$ rd. Gutting, Down Pipe, Ridding, Brackets, Spikes and Tubes, SHEET ZINC, (plain and perforated),

N.B.—BOYLAN & Co., are now **SELLING OFF** their entire STOCK OF **CROCKERY** at and under Cost.

50 dozed GRANITE CUPS and SAUCERS, from 4s per dozen.
100 " PLATES, from 2s 6d per dozen
100 " CHILDRENS MUGS, from 2s per dozen

PRESERVE POTS in Nests, EARTHEN MILK PANS. TEAPOTS, from 1s each; TUMBLERS, from 6d per doz. Also a large variety of Articles, too numerous to mention.

PIANOS AND HARMONIUMS

By all the celebrated English and French Makers, for Cash or on time-payment system—

THE FANCY DRESS BALL.

At the request of a large circle of our readers, we give the list of the ladies and gentlemen present at the ball that took place on Friday, the 3rd instant.

The ball was held in Messrs Kinross and Co's new store at the Spit, which was elegantly decorated, and brilliantly lighted for the occasion. The appearance of the room, as the guests arrived about nine o'clock, was highly picturesque, the shifting and ever varying colors of the costumes affording a most harmonious and charming effect. The scene would, however, have been more strikingly effective had the company been more numerous, the size of the room being quite capable of accommodating another fifty couples. The costumes of both ladies and gentlemen were, in many instances, extremely well adapted to the physique of the wearers, and in nearly all there might have been observed a close attention paid to the details of the dressing of the characters assumed. Amongst the most striking of the costumes were those of Mrs Burke, Mrs Stuart, Mrs Tabuteau, and Mrs Locke. Mrs Burke, in the character of a Polish peasant girl, had on a black velvet jacket, trimmed with silver cord and tassels, over a white muslin and Maltese lace bodice; an under skirt of blue, over which was a scarlet skirt trimmed with silver fringe, and having a border of silver fern leaves; cap of scarlet plush and swan's down. Mrs R. Stuart appeared as "Starlight," and wearing a black net dress thickly studded with silver stars, and on her head a silver tiara. Mrs Tabuteau's dress as an ancient lady of the 16th century was faultlessly correct. Mrs Locke as Mary Queen of Scots, was a living picture. Mrs H. C. Wilson assumed the character of Marguerite, wearing a white and blue merino dress, tanned leather satchel and shoes.

Amongst the gentlemen the most noticeable costumes were those of Messrs. Burnett, Von Tempisky, Burke, McLean, Ruddock, Eva, Ridings, and Moore. Mr

Sheet Lead, WHITE LEAD, boiled and raw Linseed, Colza, Castor and Kerosine Oils, Paint Brushes, Sash Tools, Varnish, Soft Soap, Raddle and Charcoal, Putty, Colors, (dry and ground), Liquid Paint in 5 and 10lb tins.

American Novelties—

Saws, Braces and Bits, Arkansas, Washita and Pond Stones, Corn-shellers, Weighing Machines, Sausage Machines, Ames, Collins, and Day's S. and L.H. Shovels, Axes, Hatches, &c.

Furnishing Requisites—

BEDSTEDS, (single and double), Childrens Cots, LAMPS in great variety, Cooking, Parlour and Office Stoves, from 30s upwards, Colonial Ovens, Fenders, Fire Irons, HOLLOWWARE, (tinned and enamelled, Brushware, Tinware, Looms, Scrapers, Tubs, Buckets, Wash and Knife Boards, Mangles, Wringers, Portable Washing Boilers and Furnace Pans, Charcoal and Flat Irons, Electro-plate Tea and Coffee Pots, Quets, Butter Coolers, Toast Raks, Cake Baskets, Spoons, Forks, Tea Trays, Bells, Chandeliers, (gas and kerosine) in 2 to 8 lights

Cutlery—

Rodger's, Lockwood's and Johnson's Table and Pocket Knives, Steels, Knife Sharpeners, Scissors, Razors, Fleams Sheath Knives.

Dairy Utensils—

Churns, Milk Pans and Selves, Butter Pats and Prints, Seules, Wood Spoons, &c.

Sporting—

Single and Double-barrelled Guns, Sporting and Blasting Powder, Fuce, Dynamite, &c., &c.

Mrs Brown, Nurse
Miss Brown, Vivandière
Mrs Burnett, Night
Mrs Bendall, Spanish Lady
Miss Baker, Roman Peasant
Miss Coleman, Mary Queen of Scots
Mrs Carlile, Doctor of Laws
Mrs Chambers, Lady of 19th Century
Miss Chambers, Union Jack
Miss M. Chambers, Lady of 17th Century
Miss Donnelly, Archery
Mrs Elmes, Lucrezia Borgia
Mrs Eva, Summer
Mrs Gillman, Marguerite
Miss Goudy, Winter
Mrs Hoadley, Turkish Lady
Mrs J. P. Hamlin, Italian Peasant
Mrs Irvine, Lady of 19th Century
Miss Irvine, Spring
Mrs Kennedy, Lady of 19th Century
Mrs Locke, Mary Queen of Scots
Mrs De Lisle, lady-help
Mrs Lyndon, Queen of Hearts
Mrs M. R. Miller, Winter
Mrs E. Moore, Vivandière
Mrs Newton, Lady of 16th Century
Mrs Rhodes, Spanish Lady
Mrs Randall, Swiss Peasant
Mrs Rawlinson, Lady of 19th Century
Mrs Rich, Morning
Mrs Sainsbury, Mother Hubbard
Miss Sutton, Queen of the May
Mrs H. W. P. Smith, Winter
Mrs Spencer, Farsee Lady
Mrs Shrimpton, Liberty
Mrs R. Stuart, Night
Mrs Take, Night
Miss Take, Croquet
Miss E. Taylor, Peasant of the Campagna
Miss L. Taylor, Tuscan Lady
Mrs Towgood, Quakeress
Mrs Tabuteau, Lady of 16th Century
Miss Walker, Folly
Mrs H. C. Wilson, Marguerite
Mrs Withers, Vivandière
Miss Watty, Gitana
Mrs R. P. Williams, Morning
GENTLEMEN.

Mr S. Begg, Barrister
Mr J. D. Bell, Diplomatic Uniform, No. 2
Mr F. Berkeley, Negro Minstrel
Mr W. Bogle, Sailor
Mr S. G. Brandon, Capt. Napier Militia
Mr W. Birch, Sailor
Mr R. Brathwaite, William Tell
Mr W. Burnett, King Louis XIII
Mr W. U. Burke, Cavalier
Mr J. W. Carlile, Gent. Temp. George I.
Mr W. W. Othello
Mr A. L. Campbell, Italian Brigand
Mr F. C. Caldwell, Yachtsman
Mr J. Chambers, Junr., Apache Indian Chief
Mr H. Donnelly, French Count
Mr F. W. Elmes, Turkish Dress
Mr A. R. Eva, Laertes
Mr R. Farmer, Fahoy Evening Dress
Mr J. A. Fryer, Gent. Temp. George IV.
Mr J. Giblin, Smuggler
Mr J. K. Goudie, Neapolitan Fisherman
Mr A. F. Hamilton, Highland Dress
Mr C. B. Hoadley, Collegian
Mr A. J. D. Irvine, Uniform N.A.V.
Mr J. G. Kinross, Hunting Squire of the old School
Mr Goldingham, Gentleman Jockey
Mr A. Kennedy, Evening Dress
Mr C. D. Kennedy, Don Cesar de Bazan
Mr F. J. De Lisle, Boatswain
Mr S. Locke, Turkish Dress
Mr E. Lyndon, Fancy Evening Dress
Mr Lush, Paddy O'Rafferty
Mr A. McLean, King Duncan
Mr W. Mason, Clown
Mr M. R. Miller, Sir Roger de Coverley
Mr E. Moore, Gent. Temp. George IV.
Mr T. K. Newton, Capt. Napier Militia
Mr F. Newton, Sailor
Mr E. F. Rich, Uniform Customs Landing Waiter
Mr G. E. Ridings, Cassio
Mr W. Routledge, Capt. N.A.V.
Mr J. Rhodes, Capt. Napier Militia
Mr H. S. Ruddock, Cavalier
Mr J. Rhodes, Junr., Military Undress
Mr G. E. Sainsbury, Negro Minstrel
Mr W. Shrimpton, Sailor
Mr A. St. Hill, Swiss Peasant
Mr W. I. Spencer, Regimental Surgeon
Mr R. Stuart, Garibaldi
Mr J. M. Tabuteau, Uniform Collector of Customs
Mr A. Tiffen, Swiss Peasant
Mr H. S. Tiffen, Barrister
Mr L. Von Tempisky, Malcolm
Mr H. C. Wilson, Turkish Dress
Mr E. Withers, Major Napier Militia
Mr J. N. Williams, Turkish Dress
Mr R. P. Williams, Lieut. Tower Hamlet Militia
Mr Yates, Uniform.
Mr J. Goldsworth, Swiss Peasant
Mr W. Neale, Touchstone

RESIDENT MAGISTRATE'S COURT

FRIDAY, AUGUST 3.

(Before R. Stuart, Esq., R.M.)

NEGLECTED CHILD.

William Thomas, a small boy apparently about 10 or 11 years of age, (son of the man Thomas, who some two years ago stabbed Cable, and who was tried and sentenced at the Supreme Court to a term of imprisonment), was brought up as being destitute and a wanderer, having no settled place of

abode, proper guardianship, or visible means of support. With a view to his being sent to a Naval Training School, he was remanded until Tuesday, the 7th instant.

CIVIL CASES.

Northe v Gallagher.—Claim £3. No appearance of defendant. Judgment (by default) for amount claimed, and 9s costs.

Thompson v Mahoney.—Claim £4 4s. Set-off filed for £2 16s 8d. Judgment for plaintiff, less amount of set-off, and 9s costs.

The other civil cases set down for hearing to-day were withdrawn.

SATURDAY AUGUST 4.

DRUNKENNESS.

Stephen Trainer, for this offence, was fined five shillings, or 24 hours imprisonment. He took the latter, funds being low at present.

LARCENY.

Mary Ann M'Namara, a young woman of apparently about 19 or 20 summers, and against whom there have been two previous convictions since Christmas, the last one being also for stealing a shawl, for which she was sent to prison for a month, was again brought up in custody charged with stealing another shawl of the value of 7s 6d, the property of one Caroline Johansen. Prisoner was arrested last evening about a mile out of town with the property in her possession. She was convicted, and sentenced to six months' imprisonment with hard labour.

SURETIES OF THE PEACE.

An information and complaint by one William Light, engineer of the steamer Mania against Thomas Smith, the master of the same boat, setting forth that defendant on yesterday did unlawfully threaten complainant, and praying that defendant might be required to find securities to keep the peace towards him, was dealt with by defendant being ordered to enter into his own recognizance to keep the peace for six months in the sum of £25, and to pay the costs of the Court amounting to 11s 6d.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 7.

DRUNKENNESS.

George Wright charged on the information of Edward Ashton with having been on Sunday afternoon last, "unlawfully drunk" was convicted and fined 10s with 14s costs, or in default twenty-four hours imprisonment.

Fergus Cleary was also charged with a similar offence, and further with having committed an

ASSAULT

on Edward Ashton on Sunday afternoon last. Evidence of the offence having been heard he was convicted of the assault, and fined 40s with costs 11s 6d; or, in default of payment 14 days imprisonment with hard labour. His Worship dismissed the information for drunkenness. The fine and costs were paid forthwith.

THE BOY THOMAS.

In this case an order was made that the boy be sent to the Naval Training School at Kohimarama, and kept there until he attain the age of fifteen years.

CIVIL CASES.

Sixteen cases had been set down for hearing to-day. Of these five had been paid in the meantime, two were adjourned, in three cases at suit of the "trustees in the estate of Thomas Meehan," there was no appearance, and the following came before the Court:—

Pocock v Hughes.—Claim £3 3s, for rent. Judgment for plaintiff, with 9s costs.

Allanach v Foster.—Claim £1 13s 11d, for bread supplied. Judgment, by default, for amount claimed, and 14s costs.

Crow v Blackburn.—Claim £1 7s 0d for goods. Judgment (by default) for plaintiff, with 14s cost.

Robertson v McCallum.—Claim £2 10s, bakers' account. Judgment for plaintiff (by default) for £2 10s, and costs 9s.

Neal and Close v Anderson.—Claim £8 for rent. Judgment confessed.

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 8.

DRUNKENNESS.

William Townsend, for a first offence of the above description, was fined and paid five shillings.

Frank McCarty, in a similar case, was cautioned and discharged.

Mary Fisher, charged by information and summons, with having imbibed too much last Sunday, was fined five shillings, with costs 11s 6d, she having denied the charge, which had to be substantiated by evidence, on oath, of two witnesses.

Edward Rule, for furious riding in Hastings Street last Sunday evening, was fined in the maximum penalty of £5, with costs 9s 6d, or in default one month's

imprisonment. The fine was paid forthwith.

ASSAULT.—A SCANDINAVIAN SQUABBLE.
Christian Johnson, for assulting one Nils Peterson last Sunday morning, during a dispute about some fishing nets, was fined ten shilling, with 16s costs or in default 24 hours imprisonment. The money was paid at once.

THURSDAY AUGUST 9,

ILLEGALLY ON PREMISES.

Henry Spencer, charged with having been on the premises of Massey Hutchinson, Esq., without lawful excuse, was convicted and ordered to be imprisoned for 14 days.

The Weekly Mercury

AND
HAWKE'S BAY ADVERTISER.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 1877.

THE Local Option Bill is certain to be thrown out when it comes before the House for its third reading. It is regarded on all sides as a very extreme measure. Such is the information we have received from a correspondent at Wellington, and we have no reason to doubt it. The Bill was to have come on for the second reading on Wednesday, but Mr Fox obtained leave to adjourn it. This course would not have been pursued without a well grounded fear had been entertained that the Bill would not pass safely through its second stage. It is said the supporters of local option in the matter of publicans licenses are very far from agreed as to the merits of the Bill proposed by Mr Fox. The power given by the measure to secure the multiplication of licensing districts, until every public house in the country becomes the centre of a district, is very properly regarded as a mischievous device to place power in the hands of people who have given every proof that they would be impelled in its use by their prejudices rather than by their judgment. It is just that part of the Bill which provides for the limitation of the areas of licensing districts that is regarded as the very essence of the measure proposed by Mr Fox. As we have pointed out on a former occasion, the existing Licensing Act affords every facility for the closing of public houses if a majority of two-thirds of the residents in a district can be found desirous of doing so. The size of the districts alone has prevented the teetotallers from having the sole control of the trade in alcohol, and the new Local Option Bill has been specially drawn up with the object of remedying the alleged defect. In its present shape we are glad the Bill does not stand a chance of being passed. It is likely that it will meet with the same fate as its predecessors—be so altered in Committee as to be unrecognisable by its framers.

No better evidence could be desired of the decisive victory gained by the Turks at Plevna over the Russians than the admission of the latter to a loss of 5000 men. Usually, a Russian defeat is announced a victory, consequently, when a loss is admitted, a crushing blow may be believed to be inflicted. In the case of the battle of Plevna, such a belief is strengthened by the news of the hasty retreat of the Russian van-guard from Roumelia, and the abandonment of all the posts that have been seized south of the Balkans. The defeat of the left wing of the van-guard at Esk Saghra, would not account for a general falling back on the main army unless it was found impossible to obtain support. The Russians are evidently meeting with stouter opposition than they calculated upon in their iniquitous invasion of Turkey.

THE most dangerous rock at present in front of the Ministerial state craft is Mr. Woolcock's motion *re* the incidence of taxation. It is just possible that the motion may be carried, or if not, it will certainly be so strongly supported as to leave the fate of the Ministry doubtful. So far, the question has not been made a party one, and consequently many of the Government supporters are in favor of it. The Ministry have not as yet spoken on the motion, but involving as it does such an important alteration in the Government fiscal proposals for the ensuing year, we do not see how they can do otherwise than oppose it. By accepting even the principle of the motion, the Ministry will exhibit a weakness that cannot but be destructive to confidence. If the motion be carried in any shape, the Government must admit to a defeat.

THE Herald has a correspondent learned in military matters, and what between

the cablegrams and this correspondent's information, our contemporary has got into a thorough muddle. On Tuesday the Herald said there were five divisions of the Russian army at the battle of Plevna, showing that not more than 30,000 men could have been engaged, as each division consisted of 10,000 men. On Wednesday, our contemporary received information "from a gentleman who possesses intimate personal knowledge of the constitution of the Russian army," that as the proportion of guns in that army is four to each thousand men, 40,000 must have been the number of troops at Plevna. On Thursday the Herald tells us that a Russian "army corps consists of two infantry divisions, one cavalry division, 108 guns. Infantry, 36,000 men, cavalry 8000." Therefore, we opine, that a division means 18,000 men, and if there were five divisions at Plevna, there must have been at least 90,000 infantry, or two and a half army corps, which, if complete, in every branch of service, would be 110,000 men and 270 guns. We fail to see how the Herald's final explanation confirms its statement of a previous issue. Each issue contradicts its predecessor.

MEETINGS of the unemployed are being held in several of the centres of population in the colony. In Dunedin a grand demonstration has been made, at which the Government was solicited to get such works made in the colony as local manufacturers were able to perform. On the same day, at Christchurch, we are informed, by a correspondent, a meeting of the unemployed was held, at which 250 people were present, when it was resolved that the Government be requested to put a stop to immigration, and a deputation was appointed to wait on the Mayor to solicit his assistance. On Monday a similar meeting was held at Auckland, when work was solicited, and resolutions passed for the stoppage of free immigration. We look on all this as the result of the Government failing to perform that part of the Public Works policy, of settling people on the land as the country was opened up. We must however remember that at this season of the year, employment is at all times scarce for laboring men. Farmers employ a few hands as possible, but in the course of a month or so, when the busy season arrives, employers of labor will be likely to be again found, who will want even more hands than are at present idle.

THE Municipal Council and the Napier Harbor Board are on extremely friendly terms. They are both highly respectable bodies, and they are not in the least likely to commit the vulgar blunder of quarrelling. At one time there was just a little jealousy shown by the Municipality when some valuable town reserves were being made over to the Harbor Board, but the feeling was controlled in a wonderfully creditable manner. Lately, the Corporation has given cause of offence to the Board, but the latter has not noticed the trifle, beyond the mere recognition of the fact that its rights have been invaded. It was quite pleasing, at the Board's meeting on Tuesday, to see the kindly spirit in which the "Bill for the further endowment of Napier" was alluded to by the members. Mr Rhodes having observed that "Sutton was still going on with that Bill," the Board gently smiled, as much as to say, "let him go on." The occasion for the observation arose from intimation having been given that the Board would have to spend money at the Spit on a section that had not been included in the Harbor reserves. Mr Rhodes was of opinion that this omission had evidently been a mistake which would be rectified, no doubt immediately, on the Government being made aware of the state of the case. It was then from Mr. Smith that proceeded the only sharp words that have yet been uttered towards the Municipality. When Mr. Rhodes suggested that the section in question should be applied for without delay, Mr. Smith said, "we had better look sharp about it, or the Corporation will grab it; they would grab everything if they could." This language was rather hard on the Corporation which, for the most part, has been one of the most "jumped upon" of all corporate bodies in the colony. The little matter of the Corporation applying for a piece of the Board's property, probably, had caused some irritation in the mind of Mr. Smith, and provoked words to which no meaning can be attached. But the question arises, why should not the Corporation "grab" the Spit section? It is worth asking for, and the Municipality has as much right to it as the Harbor Board.

REPLY TO EX-PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR.—Allow me, through your columns, to congratulate Ex-Presbyterian on the very remarkable progress he has made since his change from the Presbyterian faith in charity, magnanimity, humility, veneration, and the love of truth. It is very apparent that Ex-Presbyterian, in his new sphere, imagines he conveys a very great honour on the Deity by giving him the light of his countenance. Letters of such strong personal reference as that of yesterday's TELEGRAPH ought to be subscribed by the writer's name, and hence I add my name.—I am, &c.,
DAVID SIDEX.

Napier, August 9, 1877.

ANOTHER REPLY.

SIR.—The gross caricature of Presbyterian theology—a caricature quite as absurd, if not nearly so amusing, as some of Don Quixote's fancies—which appeared in your paper under the heading of "Free Thought and Scepticism" may possibly mislead some weak intellects so far as to make them believe that Presbyterianism is really what it is there described as being.

Would it therefore be too great a liberty for me to ask that you would allow one who is not an Ex-Presbyterian to give his opinion of what the Presbyterian system and the Confession really contain?

And, first, it contains the doctrine of predestination. Now, by predestination, I, and I believe nearly all Presbyterians understand, merely a plan or purpose of government on the part of the great Creator in regard to human life, just as I believe in a plan or purpose of government in regard to the whole physical and material universe. By this plan things are made to occur in human life as they do, "only that," says the Confession "God is not thereby the author of sin." The fact of predestination as existing together with moral evil is attempted by some to be explained by the theory of Leibnitz, which Chalmers favored, that this world is an optimism. Necessity for brevity prevents my explaining further.

But, second, the Confession contains the doctrine of election. The distinction between the elect and the non-elect is just the distinction in the plan which afterwards occurs in the fact between the moral and the vicious. The vicious do not become so because of any Divine operation to make them so, or to prevent their becoming virtuous, but from the various possibilities of good or evil presented by a such a plan.

Third, the Confession speaks of elect infants dying in infancy; but non-elect infants dying in infancy are unknown to the Confession, and to any Presbyterians that I ever heard of in modern times, except it may be Mr. McGrae or "Ex-Presbyterian."

Fourth, the doctrine of eternal punishment is spoken of in the Confession. And by this is meant only the complement of eternal justice, or eternal opposition to and punishment of sin, wherever or whenever it exists. But it is to be observed that it is spoken of only in the Confession as in Scripture, as a state or place; and eminent individuals in the Presbyterian Church as Dr. Norman McLeod have thought that a process of restoration after the present life was, at least in many cases, most probable; so that the eternal punishment of even the non elect is neither held nor taught by the Presbyterian Church to prevent such restoration, whatever individuals may think for themselves. And on this point there is considerable diversity among Presbyterians, as amongst the members of nearly all branches of the Christian Church. For my own part I do not see any necessity in the nature of things or otherwise for limiting either the Divine power or the Divine mercy.

Fifth, the Confession and the Presbyterian Church do not exclude the heathen or the gentle world from the benefits of salvation from moral evil and the blessings of eternal life. All that the Confession does is to make salvation depend upon faith in God as he is represented in the character of Christ. And I have a strong conviction, with many other Presbyterians, that faith in God, as a God of infinite justice goodness and mercy, in which characters Christ has preeminently represented the glory of the Divine character is exercised by many of those in heathen lands who have not as clear a knowledge of these Divine attributes as we have.—I am, &c.,

FAIR PLAY.

Napier, August 9, 1877.

THE NOVELIST.

LADY TREVOR'S SECRET;

OR, THE

Mystery of Cecil Rosse.

BY MRS. HARRIET LEWIS.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE SHEPHERD'S HUT.

In a long and wide valley, bright with spring verdure, and shut in by an undulating wall of snow-capped mountains, in the Northern Highlands of Scotland, stand a shepherd's hut. It is rudely built for summer occupation, and is covered with an overhanging thatched roof. It has a single door, a big chimney, but no window, unless a small square opening in the wall, covered with oiled paper, may be so termed.

The interior of the hut consists of one room. The only floor is of cobble-stones laid closely together. Two rude bunks attached to the wall, and one suspended above the other, served as couches. In the blackened chimney hangs a crane from which swings a kettle. A small wooden cupboard serves as a repository for food, and is the only larder the hut contains.

The accommodations of the place, it will thus be seen, are of the rudest description. The hut is a mere shelter against storms—a place to sleep in—nothing more.

During the long Highland winters, the place was left to the winds and snows. But when spring came, the sun's increasing heat unlocked the ice-bound streams, and the grass sprang up anew, it was always occupied.

The valley belonged to a Scottish laird who lived many miles to the southward. In May of every year he sent his flocks to this lonely spot in charge of two shepherds, who watched them during the long summers, and drove them back to their winter quarters in the autumn.

The shepherds had just arrived. The flocks were already scattered through the valley, grazing on the tender young grass. The hour was twilight. The elder shepherd, a big, brawny fellow, in a kilt, with legs upon which the muscles stood out like whipcords, lighted his pipe and went out to look after the young lambs, and to see that none of his flock had strayed into the mountain-passes.

His companion sat down at the door of the hut, just outside, and smoked a pipe also. He had not the other's muscle or intelligence. His face had a vacant look; he was stupid and thick-headed; but there was a doggedness in his aspect that showed that when he had once made up his mind, whether right or wrong, he was not likely to change his opinions or purposes.

He was surveying the landscape with half-shut eyes, lazily puffing his pipe, when he beheld two Highland ponies coming down the valley, along the overgrown track that had many years before been a decently kept road.

The shepherd rubbed his eyes in amazement.

He had been in this lonely valley summer after summer for years, but had never seen a face there other than that of his shepherd comrade. He rubbed his eyes, fancying himself the victim of an illusion.

The ponies came nearer and nearer. He presently detected that one was lame. His next discovery was that the riders of the ponies were women.

He sprang to his feet, opening his eyes and his mouth in amazement. He held his pipe in his hand and stood like a statue for some minutes, while the ponies continued to advance, their speed quickening as they neared the hut.

The two horsewomen, as the reader surmises, were Cecil Rosse and Gretchen. This was the evening of their second day of their flight from Black Rock. They had ridden hard all day, halting only an hour to rest and feed their steeds. Gretchen's pony had slipped upon a rolling-stone in a wild-mountain pass during the afternoon and had fallen lame. This lameness had increased with every hour of subsequent travel. The roads had been bad and rough. In many places they had been undistinguishable, and the fugitives feared that they had lost their way and were wandering in a wilderness when they should not be able to escape.

They had reached the Devil's Gap early in the afternoon. This was the place at which Jarvis had expected to overtake them. It was a narrow pass between two mountains. The road was barely six feet in width, and was bordered on one side for half its distance by a deep gully, cut sharply and cleanly between the mountains by an ancient mountain torrent that had now dwindled

to a brook. The terrors of this pass kept the two fugitives dumb. They dismounted, afraid to trust to their ponies, and lead the beasts for a distance of two miles, up a steep ascent and down again upon the opposite side. The Gap was gloomy beyond description, and even the ponies breathed more freely when it was left behind.

Towards nightfall, when wearied and anxious, they began to think of camping out for the night, they entered the valley we have described. Miss Rosse was the first to see the flocks of sheep. The sight of them kindled hope in the fugitives' breasts. Where domestic animals were, men were likely to be also. They hurried on, and soon afterwards caught sight of the lonely hut.

"We are safe now, Miss Cecil!" cried the old serving woman, in a transport of joy. "I had begun to think that we were lost, and should perish in the cold to-night. But God has watched over us, and brought us to a safe refuge."

Gretchen's withered old face quivered in every feature. What her terrors had been were shown by the tremulous lips and tearful eyes at sight of the little valley hut.

They hurried forward, the steeds seeming to understand and share in their joy and relief.

The shepherd was still standing, open-mouthed, when they came up and drew rein at his door. Cecil slipped from the back of her steed. He was quick to detect that she was a lady, and pulled off his cap and saluted her by an awkward bow.

Gretchen, stiff in every limb, as was her young mistress, slid to the ground. The shepherd looked in the direction the fugitives had come in the expectation of seeing a male attendant. Not seeing one he fixed his bewildered gaze upon Miss Rosse.

She stood for a moment in perfect silence, her heart swelling, her agitation too great to allow her to speak.

She had thought herself lost. She had expected to camp out upon the ground all night. She had been haunted by fears of being overtaken by her enemies. But here was shelter. Here was surely help. She trembled so that she could scarcely stand, and leaned against her tired steed for support.

"Will you give us shelter for the night?" she asked, her low, sweet voice quivering. "We are very tired, having travelled all day."

"Ye can stop here, an' ye wull," responded the shepherd, glancing doubtfully over his shoulder at the rude interior of the hut. "But it's not a place for the like o' you, ledly."

"We shall be grateful for any shelter," replied Cecil, her brightening glance giving emphasis to her words.

"Coom in, then," was the prompt response. "The beasts 'll stand. They have na the strength to get away the night. Coom in, ledly."

He backed into the cabin. The fugitives followed him. He flung a handful of pine cones and branches on the low fire, and a fragrant warmth and brightness filled the bare chamber.

Cecil and Gretchen sat down upon two wooden stools before the hearth, and held their hands to the delicious blaze.

The shepherd continued to regard the pair with wonder and surprise.

That one was mistress and the other a servant was apparent to him. But what were they doing in this lonely region unattended? He began to be suspicious of them—the appearance of two women in that remote valley being utterly unprecedented.

Gretchen looked about her anxiously at the unplastered walls and unmitigated poverty of the place. She was unable to determine in her own mind what manner of people lived in such utter barrenness as this. Even the beasts at Zorlitz were better housed. She looked in vain for some signs of a woman's presence, and then fixed her regards upon her host, wondering of what nationality he was.

"Where are we?" she asked, in English, giving expression to her curiosity.

The shepherd stared: the folly of such a question made him suspect her sanity.

"Why, dinna ye see?" he asked. "Speer about ye' woman. Ye're in a shepherd's hut, that's where ye are!"

"Ah!" exclaimed Gretchen, comprehending him, although his words had not the soft flow that belongs to English tongues. "But where is it—this hut?"

The shepherd's surprise increased. "Dinna ye know the Benmar valley?" he demanded.

"This is the Benmar valley, then?" said old Gretchen. "But what country is it? Are we in England, or Norway, or Sweden, or Iceland?"

The shepherd turned his puzzled gaze from the old peasant woman to Miss Rosse. The young lady was listening

intently, with an eagerness that showed that she, too, awaited his reply with anxiety. Her dusky eyes were fixed upon his stolid, vacant face with a look that indicated a keen suspense.

"Lor' bless and save us!" thought the shepherd. "God be gade to us. These are two fules that don't know the country they be in!"

He made a prudent, partial retreat towards the door.

"Are you not going to answer?" demanded Gretchen, with increasing anxiety. "What country is this?"

"It's Scotland!" was the reply, as the host leaned against the inner door-post. "If ye'r here, how happens ye didnt know that?"

"What part of Scotland is it?" asked Gretchen, paying no heed to his question.

"The Hielan, of course. Do you see mountains like these in the Lowlan's? Are ye daft, woman? Sure your mistress knows all this," and he turned his gaze upon Cecil.

The girl did not answer, but her looks and her silence were sufficient negative even to this dull-witted questioner.

"Our ignorance of our whereabouts must seem strange to you," said Cecil, noticing his looks of suspicion and general uneasiness. "We supposed that we were in Yorkshire, until very recently—Yorkshire in England. We were brought up the coast in a yacht and landed at a lonely old house where we have spent the winter."

"The servants in charge of the house where our enemies," exclaimed Gretchen. They tried to kill us. We succeeded in making our escape yesterday morning before daybreak, and have ridden hard ever since. Our enemies are in pursuit of us. They mean to kill us both. They may arrive at any moment. Will you protect my young mistress and save her?" pleaded the old woman earnestly.

The Highlander did not reply. In his own mind he deemed "the foreign woman" decidedly "uncanny." He regarded Cecil questioningly.

"My servant has given you an outline of the truth," said Cecil, with a calm and gentle dignity that ought to have convinced him of her perfect sanity. "I have a secret enemy who caused us both to be brought to this coast, when we supposed we were on our way to Yorkshire. The servants at the house from which we have just escaped, were in the pay of the enemy. They sought to murder us in our beds, but we escaped. They are in pursuit: they are sure to arrive here to-night in search of us. Will you not befriend and protect us. Surely you would not deliver us up to be killed?"

The shepherd scratched his sandy head and vainly wished for his comrade's return.

"It's a strange story, a vera strange story," he commented. "I dinna think I ever heard the like afore. Murders and them things dinna belong to the Hielan's. Where was the house where you lived the winter?"

"It was called Black Rock—" "Black Rock? The house of the lost Cathairns! I ken the place. And you have been in that house?"

"We have spent the winter there!" The shepherd looked incredulous. He did not believe the assertion.

"The old house is ha'nted!" he exclaimed. "For fifty years no human being has been inside its doors. It is cursed. The blood of the murdered laird stains its flures. The twin brothers walk the halls and chambers, and spectral lights are seen in the windows. No one would sleep in Black Rock House for a king's throne. An' ye say ye've spent the winter there?"

"We have!" declared Gretchen, stoutly.

"Ye must be mistaken. I dinna think it possible!" declared the shepherd, still incredulous.

"You have not answered me," said Gretchen. "You have not promised to protect us."

"No one shall kill ye, be sure o' that. Make yoursels comfortable, while I attend to the ponies," was the reply. "Are ye hungry?"

"We have food," answered the serving woman. "I will bring it in!"

The bag had been removed from the pony's back and placed on the ground beside the door. Gretchen brought it in, and the fugitives ate their supper, while their host made a pretence of looking after their steeds, and kept up an impatient watch for the return of his comrade.

The shepherd had no faith whatever in the story he had heard. He did not believe that a person existed who would dare spend a winter in Black Rock House. All his superstitions were against such credence. He did not understand his visitors. Consequently, being ignorant, he distrusted them.

He waited outside until Cecil came out and stood beside him, looking anxiously in the direction she had come.

"Ye look beat, ledly," he said, respectfully. "Ye'd better turn into one o' them bunks and go to sleep. Ye can fasten the door to suit yersel, and I'll watch outside. I expect my comrade back soon, and we'll let no harm happen ye."

Cecil raised her trusting eyes to his in gratitude. She put out her little white hand, which he seized and looked at as if it were a curiosity presented for his examination and then dropped it as if it had burned him.

"May God reward you for your kindness to two friendless creatures!" said the girl, softly. "We will go to bed and to sleep, trusting in your promise to protect us. Good-night."

She went inside and closed the door. "They can't help bein' fules," mused the host, touched by her beauty and sweetness into more consideration than he had before displayed. "She's a pretty fule, anyhow. To think she didn't know that this was Scotland! She must be clean daft!"

He resumed his smoking. In the course of an hour his comrade returned, and the story was rehearsed to him, with such additions and embellishments as the circumstances seemed to warrant.

"We'll hae to sleep outside," said the new comer, whose name was Sandy. "From what you say, Wully, it seems that the two women are daft. If anybody is after 'em, it's because they need lookin' after. I dinna believe in murders in these times, nor in any canny person living at Black Rock House. Happen, it isn't safe to leave the two women-creatures in the hut. They may burn in afore mornin', but we'll take luck as it comes. I wad I hae a blanket to wrap mysel frae the cauld. Hacing nane except my plaidie, I maun keep awak' the night!"

This melancholy reflection occupied their attention for some minutes. Then they resumed their low discourse, keeping warm by walking to and fro, and clapping their arms lustily.

Meanwhile, Cecil and Gretchen said their prayers and crept into the hard bunks and went to sleep. Their bones ached in every joint; they were thoroughly exhausted, and not even their anxieties could ward off slumber.

The shepherds watched outside, and talked, and found it hard work to keep awake. Both were dozing about midnight when they were aroused by the sound of hoofs close at hand.

Starting up, they found themselves confronted by Jarvis.

The man had been drinking heavily throughout the day, but was now apparently sober. His anger against his escaped prisoners was all alive, however, under his plausible exterior, and his resolve to kill the two fugitives at the earliest practical moment was stronger than ever.

"Good evening, sirs," said Jarvis, politely, drawing rein, but not alighting. "Have you seen anything of two women travelling alone? By Heaven! there are the ponies now! The women are here!"

He sprang lightly to the ground, bristling with excitement.

"There are two women-creatures here," responded Sandy, with true Scotch caution, "but if they be the ones ye seek we dinna ken."

"They are the same. I recognize the ponies. One of them is an old foreign servant-woman. The other is a girl—"

"A pretty bit lassie, with eyes like clouds with the sun shinin' through 'em," said "Wully."

"The same! I've been on their track this two days. Thank fortune I've found 'em. Have a drop, sir?"

He brought forth from an inner pocket of his heavy overcoat a long black bottle half filled with Scotch whiskey, and offered it to the two men. They accepted the courtesy, drinking copiously. Under the warmth of the fiery liquid their caution and reserve fled. Their distrust of the fugitives inspired them with zeal for the pursuer. Jarvis tossed down a draught when they had finished, and restored the bottle to its previous receptacle.

"About the women?" he said. "You've given up the hut to them, I see, while you took the outside. That's kind of you. I suppose they are asleep? I am anxious to get hold of. I suppose they told a queer story, eh?"

"Ay, they did," said Wully. "They talked like twa fules. I never heered the like, mon."

"We concluded they was daft," said Sandy.

Jarvis was quick enough to seize upon the word and the idea it contained.

"Daft," he repeated, "That's jest what they are—as crazy as two Bedlamites. They escaped from me—I keep a mad-house, you know—and they are dangerous—I am Dr. Graham—I demand you to surrender them, in the name of the law."

The two Highlanders were impressed.

"Is your mad 'us at Black Rock?" inquired Sandy.

"Black Rock!" echoed Jarvis, pretending horror. "I should hope not. I have a sanitary retreat at Indledon. They came from there."

Indledon was a small hamlet on the coast fifty miles distant from Black Rock. The shepherds looked at each other significantly.

"I knew that no one would bide at Black Rock over night," said Wully. "I knew twa woman-creatures were clean daft. And ye're their keeper. And they're escaped frae ye? I kened they wouldn't be wandering around alone without a mon with 'em if all was right. I am glad ye found 'em. They'd froze or starved to death among the mountains in a day or two. Their stories were altogether too curious to be true. I didn't believe in 'em for one minute," and he drew himself up importantly, pluming himself on his worldly wisdom.

"I shall have to halt to-night, anyhow," said Jarvis. "My beast is tired out, and I need rest. And in the morning you'll surrender my patients to me, eh?"

"Certainly," replied Sandy. "In the morning the two pair creatures shall be given up to you. Do ye take us for heathen that we'd let them escape to perish among the hills? They may say what they will pair, daft things. We'll see that they go back with ye."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A FAILURE.

A day or two after the scene in Lady Trevor's drawing-room in which the handsome widow had found herself at such disadvantage between Lord St. Leonards on the one hand, and Mr Pulford on the other, the Earl of Glenham returned to London from his trip to the Continent.

As the marquis had said, Lord Glenham had gone abroad upon a false clue, like very many others they had before pursued. His lordship returned disheartened and well-nigh discouraged, and proceeded directly to his town house, where his mother waited and watched, with ceaseless anxiety for his coming.

He let himself in at the hall door, and ascended to her private sitting-room.

The countess sat alone, a book on her knee, her eyes turned towards the window in an absent, unseeing gaze. She was thin and worn; the proud and haughty old face wore a very sorrowful expression. She grieved incessantly over the unfortunate attachment of her son for one whom she honestly believed an adventuress, and whom she scorned for the mystery of her birth. She believed his life to be blighted. She knew well, knowing his steadfast, constant nature, that he would never love another woman with the passionate love which he gave to Cecil Rosse, and she feared that if he did not find her he would never marry.

"Lord Henry Ravensdale married the woman he loved, and she wrecked his life!" thought the countess. "Gordon will not marry Miss Rosse, I trust, yet none the less will she be his ruin! If he had never gone to the Black Forest on that unfortunate hunting-trip, he might to-day have been the happy husband of Lady Trevor!"

She sighed heavily. Maldred Crafton had visited her that day, reported the failure of his own private efforts to find Cecil Rosse, and had borrowed a hundred pounds of her with which to prosecute his search. The proud lady felt humiliated in receiving the report of her confederate. She blushed now in thinking how she, the earl's mother, had persuaded his trusted friend to play the traitor to him.

"It is for Gordon's good!" she said to herself. "If the girl is found Maldred Crafton must and shall marry her. If she were in my house at this moment I'd give her up to Crafton to save my son!"

It was at this point in her musings that the earl entered her presence.

She arose to greet him, blushing like a girl. Her proud old eyes filled with tenderness; she stood erect and stately as a palm, and stretched out her arms to him in welcome.

The earl hastened to embrace her. He kissed her affectionately, but to the mother's jealous heart something of his old tenderness was lacking. He was troubled and pre-occupied and she believed that his heart was estranged from her.

"What news, Gordon?" she asked resuming her seat, her lips trembling.

"No news," responded the earl, gloomily. "I went to Munich to find that I had followed an English lady and her daughter. Have you any news for me?"

"None whatever. There is a note on the table addressed to you, which was sent by Lady Trevor two days since. That may contain news."

The earl found and tore open the missive. It simply contained a request from the widow that he would call upon her immediately upon his return. He laid it upon his mother's knee.

"Lady Trevor wishes to see me," he said. "She may have received news. I will dress and go to her immediately. I will be back to dinner."

He withdrew to his own apartment. The countess rang and ordered a luncheon to be taken to him, and resumed her sorrowful reverie. As soon as the earl had dressed, he quitted the house without again seeing his mother, and proceeded on foot to South Audley-street.

Lady Trevor's footman announced him and ushered him into the drawing-room, where the handsome widow, in becoming toilet, awaited visitors.

She hurried to meet him, showing signs of an emotion which he interpreted to suit himself.

"You have news of Miss Rosse?" he questioned eagerly, shaking hands with her. "Has she written to you, Lady Trevor, in regard to her broken engagement?"

"She has not. I have no news of her," replied Lady Trevor.

The earl's countenance fell.

"I interpreted your note as indicating news of her," he said, his face pale. "I am always thinking of her, you know, hence my natural mistake. I have always been sure that she would write to you sooner or later, to explain her disappearance. No light, then, has been thrown upon the mystery of her loss during my absence?"

"None whatever. Sit down, Gordon. Why do you persist in searching for a woman who is dead, or who does not care for you? Believe me, if Miss Rosse loved you she would find means to communicate with you. I presume, if she lives, that she is in Australia or America, and that she has long since forgotten you."

"I do not agree with you, Lady Trevor—"

"It used to be Edith," said the widow, reproachfully. "Have I forfeited your friendship, or do you forget that we are distantly akin? I

don't know how to understand your coldness."

"I did not intend to see cold, Edith," replied the earl, gravely. "We are distant cousins, and I can never regard you as a stranger. Your sympathy in my present troubles is very sweet to me."

"Is it, Gordon? Is it really?" asked Lady Trevor, quickly. "Am I more to you than other friends? Forgive me. You cannot understand me. You have your troubles: I have mine. I am only a weak woman—not a brave strong man like you—and my troubles are sometimes too much for me. I wish I were dead, Gordon—I do indeed!"

She buried her face in her lace-trimmed pocket-handkerchief, dropping her head slightly towards his shoulder.

The earl moved away unconsciously.

"You surprise me, Edith," he exclaimed. "You unhappy? You? What can be the matter?" and his voice was full of sympathy. "Is there anything I can do for you?"

Lady Trevor sobbed softly.

"Is your grief connected with Lord St. Leonards?" asked the earl. The widow shook her head.

"You can't possibly be embarrassed pecuniarily?"

"No—no, indeed!"

"Then what can it be. Speak out, Edith. Do not think me so selfishly absorbed in my own griefs as to be oblivious of yours. If you want a friend you know that I would gladly serve you. Tell me what troubles you."

He took her hand in his, with true brotherly interest, full of concern for her.

Lady Trevor hesitated. She had decided to make a bold effort to secure the earl for her lover. Knowing his nobleness and chivalry, she fancied that she might constrain him to become her suitor. But a woman even one so hardened and scheming as this one, does not lay aside her womanly delicacy without a pang, and she shrunk from the course she had marked out for herself.

It was only when she remembered all that she had at stake that she mustered up her courage for her task.

But she shivered like one about to plunge into an icy bath, and her voice really trembled as she faltered:

"I—I am in love, Gordon. There, the secret is out!"

"In love?" said the earl, remembering certain rumours, he had heard before his departure. "Not with Mr Pulford, Edith? Is that it? And do you wish me to prepare the marquis for your marriage with Pulford?"

"No, no. I hate Mr Pulford!" cried Lady Trevor, petulantly. "He is only my servant, although people say he is my suitor. As if I'd marry him!" she added, contemptuously.

"I am glad to hear that. I don't like the man myself," said the earl seriously. "He is plausible, but I don't think him honest and honorable, Edith. And I am quite sure that the marquis would never have become reconciled to such a match for you. Who then, since it is not Mr Pulford, is your lover?"

"I have loved him for years," sobbed Lady Trevor. "He is the noblest man in England, and the handsomest. I worship him—but I fear that he does not love me!"

The earl looked grave and uncomfortable. But no suspicion that he was the object of the widow's affections crossed his mind.

"I don't think I quite understand you, Edith," he said, after a brief pause. "You are too proud a woman to give your love unsought—too delicate to confess to such a bestowal of your affections even in your own heart! You mean that you are loved in return, but that the gentleman has not yet in so many words told you of his love. He is poor, perhaps, and too proud to address himself to one of the richest women

in England? Is that it?"

"No. Despise me as you will, Gordon, I have given my love unsought. I dare confess it to you. I have born my misery until I am nearly mad. If the man I love were happy, I could die and make no sign." But he is not. I see him pursuing a phantom when he might make me happy, and I might make him happy. He loves one unworthy of him, as far below him as a worm is below a star. And I watch his coming and going, and mourn for him, and cry at night, and wish that I were dead. Do not think me unwomanly—oh, Gordon, are you blind?"

Her voice rang out sharply, in a real anguish that came from her soul.

The earl arose, his blonde face flushing to the temples. He could not affect to misunderstand her. Her meaning was plain at last.

"You witness my humiliation," said Lady Trevor, rising also, "but you are too noble to exult in it. I own the truth. I dare to own it for your sake, and for your mother's. The countess desires me for her granddaughter, and I love her dearly. Grandpapa desires our marriage. Why waste your life in lamenting Miss Rosse. Gordon, I love you! I love you! Will you not accept my love, and let me devote myself to your happiness. Have pity on me who have so humbled myself, and tell me, Gordon, that I have not done it in vain."

She waited in breathless suspense his response. She had counted on his generosity and chivalry—had she counted in vain?

His reply sounded on her ears like a knell.

"Edith," he said, in a grave, sorrowful voice, in which was only the tenderest pity, the kindest brotherly affection, "you distress me, you wrong yourself. I shall never marry unless I marry Rosse. This I must say to you in justice. I am sorry for what you have told me. I trust that you have mistaken your own heart. When you think the matter over you will know that I could not be otherwise than true to Cecil and myself."

He took her hand and raised it respectfully to his lips.

Lady Trevor, with a great cry of despair, made a gesture to throw herself in his arms. He retreated abruptly, with an involuntary movement, reddening again to the roots of his blonde hair.

"I must take my leave, Edith," he said, gently. "I desire to see Lord St. Leonards and Mr Crafton this afternoon. They may have news for me."

He bade her adieu with a courtesy and respect which even her unwomanliness had not seemed to diminish, and took his leave.

Lady Trevor sank upon the sofa, sobbing with rage and despair.

At that moment, Mr Pulford, who had witnessed the entire scene, emerged from the adjoining conservatory, saying, with a sneer, as he pinned a bouquet in the button-hole of his black coat:

"A delightful little scene, madam. So you 'hate' Pulford? You shall pay for this, my lady, when you are my wife. At present, permit me to say, it is four o'clock and the carriage is at the door and we are going for a drive in the park. I will ring for your bonnet."

He rang and ordered the maid to bring Lady Trevor's bonnet and mantle. The widow would have rebelled and refused to accompany him, but there was a lurking devil in his eye that compelled her obedience. She entered the carriage with him and they drove to Hyde Park.

"All the world—our world—knows of our engagement, Edith," said Mr Pulford. "You will meet many well-bred stares to-day. Be prepared for them. By the by, my dear Edith," and he looked at her, and

she saw again the lurking devil that had scared her; "don't think I have forgotten the scene I just witnessed in your drawing-room. I shall pay you all I owe you, after our marriage with interest a thousand-fold!"

And Lady Trevor knew that if he obtained the opportunity, he would keep his word.

"To be continued."

ST. JOHN'S PARISH.

THE following letter from the Primate was received on Wednesday by the Rev. D'Arcy Irvine:—

Bishop's Court, Christchurch,
August 3, 1877.

Rev. and Dear Sir,—By a telegram which I received yesterday evening from one of the Churchwardens of St. John's, I have learnt that they have agreed to my proposal to obtain the services of the Rev. H. W. St. Hill as *locum tenens* during the vacancy of the Incumbency. Mr. St. Hill therefore will enter upon his temporary charge probably immediately, and so relieve you from those duties in the cure which you so kindly undertook, and which, I fear, must have entailed upon you no inconsiderable trouble in the midst of your other engagements. I must beg you to accept my sincere thanks for your very timely assistance, without which the services of our Church in the Parish of St. John must have been discontinued for several Sundays.

Believe me to be,

Rev. and Dear Sir,
Yours very faithfully,
H.J.C.,
Christchurch.

Rev. G. M. D'Arcy Irvine,
Napier.

THE HOLY BANNER OF THE TURKS.

We quote from an American paper the following account of the Sacred Banner:—"What is this Flag of the Prophet, around which the turbaned, 'the Faithful,' are called upon to rally? The best authorities state that it was originally of a white colour, and was composed of the turban of the Loreish captured by Mahomed. A black flag was, however, soon substituted in its place, consisting of the curtain which had hung before the door of Ayesha, the favourite wife of the Prophet, whose affection for her was so strong that he was wont to say that she would be the first of his wives to whom the gates of Paradise would be opened. The *Sanjak-Sherif* is regarded by the Mahomedans as their most sacred relic. It first came into the possession of the followers of Omar, the second Caliph of the Moslems, generally regarded as the founder of Mahomedan power, as from a mere sect he raised it to the rank of a conquering nation, and left to his successor an Empire greater than that which Alexander of Macedon had made and ruled in the olden time. It was this Omar who assumed the title of 'Commander of the Faithful' (*Emiral-mumena*), by which, as the readers of the 'Arabian Night' Entertainments will remember, the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid, who was contemporary with Charlemagne, was always addressed. The flag of the Prophet passed from the followers of Omar, at Damascus, into the hands of the conquering Abbasides, in the middle of the eighth century, next into those of the Caliphs of Bagdad and Kahira. It was brought into Europe towards the close of the sixteenth century by Sultan Amurath III., with whom Queen Elizabeth made a treaty of commerce in 1579. It was deposited in Constantinople, where, covered with forty-two wrappings of silk, it was deposited in a chapel in the interior of the Seraglio, where it is perpetually guarded by several Emirs with constant prayers. It is known, however, that the banner unfolded by the Moslems at the beginning of a war, and likewise carefully preserved, is not the same as the identical flag which Mahomed had made out of the white turban of the Koreish. The Moslems believe that it is, and will fight bravely under it, thus verifying Mokanna's famous declaration, that—

Faith, fantastic Faith, once wedded fast,
To one dear falsehood, hugs it to the last.

The Melbourne Argus says:—"A correspondent writes with reference to the naval engagement off the Peruvian coast, mentioned in our telegraphic summary of European news, 'that neither of the vessels mentioned is ironclad as the term is generally understood. The Amethyst is an actual sister to the Sapphire, familiar to us from her visit in September last. The Shah is described as an iron ship cased in wood. This is a new class of ship, built for speed.' No doubt it is the circumstance of two unarmoured vessels having engaged an ironclad turret ram which gives special interest to the event."

NAPIER MUNICIPAL COUNCIL.
THURSDAY AUGUST 2.

SPECIAL MEETING.

The Council met at 7 p.m.
Present—His Worship the Mayor (in the chair), Councillors Lee, Tuxford, Swan, Neal, Vautier, Holder, Lyndon, and Williams.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The Councillors having been summoned to attend a special meeting for the adoption of the additional By-laws, as published in the DAILY TELEGRAPH, their consideration was gone into.

By-law No. 10 was amended so as to read (1) that no cesspool should be sunk at a less distance than 4 feet from the land of any adjoining owner or occupier, or public road or right of way; and (2) that no closet hereafter to be erected should be at a less distance than 10 feet from any adjacent dwelling, or at a less distance than 6 feet from any public road or right-of-way.

On the motion of the Mayor, the By-laws were adopted, to be finally confirmed at a further special meeting in conformity with the Act.

ORDINARY MEETING.

The minutes of the special meeting were read and confirmed.

The Public Works Committee's report was then brought up, read, and adopted. It contained the following recommendations:—

1. That the tender of Mr. Barry for the removal of nightsoil, rubbish, &c., at 3s per closet per month for removal of nightsoil, and for removal of rubbish from hotels and shops, &c., 5s 6d per month, houses on the hills 2s, and houses on the flat 1s per month per house, be accepted for a period ending 30th June, 1878.
 2. That the tender of Messrs. Mills and Oxenham, for carting for the period ending 30th June, 1878, at 13s 11d for single horse drays per diem, and 18s for two-horse drays per diem, be accepted.
 3. That the tender of Messrs Joseph Parker and Co., for excavating and filling about 8000 yards trenches for waterpipes at 4 1/2d per lineal yard be accepted.
 4. That Mr Miller be requested to proceed at once with the work of forming the Beach-road, and that the Municipal Engineer confer with Mr. Miller as to the width of the road and the height of the wall thereon to be built, said road to be 25 feet wide.
 5. That as requested by Mr. Colenso, the Engineer be instructed to form the upper part of Tamiyson-street about 20 feet wide.
 6. That the land forming portion of the Milton Terrace-road dedicated to the Crown by Mr John Cushing, be accepted by the Council as a public road.
 7. That the Municipal Solicitor be directed to request the District Engineer, Mr Bold, not to proceed with the fencing of the railway line along the Hyderabad-road until further instructions are received from the hon. the Minister for Public Works.
 8. That the works proposed to be done in the Engineer's Recommendation Report forwarded herewith be authorised.
 9. That the holes in Carlyle-street, opposite sections Nos. 54 and 46, be ordered to be filled in.
 10. That the Engineer be instructed to prepare specifications and call for tenders for the formation and laying of street crossing at the following places:—Neal & Close's to the Union Bank, Neal and Co's to the National Bank, the Union Bank to the Criterion Hotel, Boylan and Co's to Newton and Irvine's, Newton and Irvine's to A. Manoy's, Manoy's to the Masonic Hotel, the Bank of Australasia to Price and Co's, Price and Co's to the Post Office, the Government gate to the Empire Hotel.
 11. That steps be formed and the gradient lowered in the Harvey-road, conditionally upon the inhabitants guaranteeing to defray the half cost thereof.
 12. That Edwardes-street, from its junction at Hastings-street to the sea beach, be formed and metalled half a chain wide.
 13. That the vouchers for the expenditure on account of the borough fund account, the waterworks account, and the swamp reclamation account for the month of July, 1877, forwarded herewith, be passed and ordered to be paid.
- On the motion of the Mayor the Council agreed to the payment of sixpence per head for the collection of the tax on dogs.
- The Municipal Engineer's progress report was read.
- After some discussion on the state of Carlyle-street, His Worship the Mayor stated that he had been in communication with the Colonial Secretary on the subject of the occupation by the Corporation of its present offices. The Government, through the Under Secretary, had telegraphed to him that they could not guarantee to the Corporation its possession of the rooms now occupied, and that being the case, he (the Mayor) thought it desirable steps should be taken to procure suitable premises without delay.
- His Worship drew the attention of the Council to the unprotected state of the

public records and documents, through the want of a fire-proof safe, and to the serious loss the Corporation would suffer in the event of a fire.

In reply to Cr. Lyndon, His Worship said the Masonic Hall might be leased for offices.

Cr. Tuxford opposed the idea of the Council abandoning possession of the offices they occupied. If the iron safe in the Town Clerk's office was not big enough to hold the books and papers, another one could be bought.

Cr. Lee did not believe in being turned out of the building, it would be better to go before that operation was put in force. He thought the offices they occupied were both unsuitable and insecure, and that their security would not be improved by buying more safes. He would like to see the Borough have its own Town Hall, erected on the reserve near the Court House, and in the meantime he thought they should endeavor to find suitable offices.

His Worship gave notice that at the next meeting he would lay before the Council some tangible proposition relative to obtaining suitable offices.

After some other business of no interest was transacted, the Council adjourned.

ARRIVAL OF THE SUEZ MAIL.

(PER S.S. RINGAROOMA.)

LONDON JUNE 10.

In the house of Lords, Lord Morley proposed the appointment of a British Consul, to be stationed somewhere in Central Asia to watch the interests of India. Lord Salisbury replying, said that there was no occasion for alarm because of the proximity of the Russians to our Indian boundaries, and observed that he was already aware of the desirability of having a consul in Central Asia.

CONSTANTINOPLE, June 13.

The Porte has ordered the Governor of Crete to send Mussulman and Christian delegates to Constantinople, to explain the demands of the Cretans.

After a battle between the Turkish force under Sulieman Pasha and the Montenegrins, which lasted continuously for 55 hours, the latter withdrew to Posteni. Both sides suffered very heavy losses.

LONDON, June 14.

Advices from St. Petersburg state that a Russian expeditionary force is marching against the Turcomans from Kras-boodso, and that the Turcomans, having been already attacked and completely defeated by the Russians, are migrating to Merve.

LONDON, June 26.

According to official Turkish dispatches the Russians unsuccessfully attacked Batoum on the 23rd inst. The Turkish commander of the garison, on the 24th, attacked and completely defeated the Russians, darkness only preventing his occupying the enemy's entrenchments.

The Russians on Sunday commenced a terrific bombardment of Rustchuk, the English consulate there being destroyed. The Turks are replying vigorously. Colonel Wellesley, military attaché to the British Embassy at St. Petersburg, has been coldly received at the Russian headquarters at Ploiesti.

The statement that dissensions exist in the English Cabinet is untrue.

In reply to Lord Elcho, who wished for some assurance from the Government as to their preparedness to meet any emergency, Mr Secretary Hardy stated that whilst the army was maintained on a peace footing as the nucleus of a larger force for purposes of war, he had not lost sight of the necessity of being prepared for what he hoped was not a probable contingency.

One hundred and fifty houses in the Jewish quarter of the town of Dorabain, Roumania, were sacked last Sunday, and the owners robbed of 90,000 ducats; several persons were killed, and 24 seriously wounded. Two arrests only have been made.

A large gathering of Czechians was held on the Liska Mountain, near Prague, last Sunday, at which the Pope was burnt in effigy, together with copies of his late anti-Russian allocution. A number of the parties have been arrested and will be prosecuted.

A return just published shows that the grand total of militia, yeomanry, and ficient volunteers is at present 263,909, which gives a percentage of 636 of the population between 15 and 35 years of age.

At a reception at Liege during the annual fetes, the King of the Belgians stated that in consequence of the very grave aspect of affairs in Europe large subsidies would have so be asked for the army.

Her Majesty the Queen has added to her monogram the initial letter J, signi-

fying the Latin word "Imperatrix." Mr Macmichael, the well-known heraldic artist and designer, of Chelsea, has been commissioned to prepare perfectly original designs, of monograms, from which are to be cut dies for the private use of her Majesty. These are to consist of the letters "V.R.I." with the royal crown.

There are now on the Thames two gunboats which have been built for the Turkish Government. As they cannot leave our shores, they will, we are informed, probably pass into the hands of the British Government for, as the phrase goes, "a mere song." The iron-clad built on the Thames for the Porte can we believe, be removed, inasmuch as the Turks were sharp enough to commission her before the war broke out, and international rules will allow sufficient coal to be taken on board to carry her to her first port.

Mr T. Brassey, M.P., with Mrs Brassey and family, has arrived home in his yacht Sunbeam, having accomplished a trip round the world, after travelling 36,000 miles under steam and canvas during a period of 46 weeks.

The Ottoman authorities of Podgoritzza complain that in the fight at Maljat five Turkish soldiers had their ears and noses cut off. Two of them had died since their arrival at the Spush hospital.

A terrible act of vendetta, fortunately without fatal results, has been perpetrated at Lercara, the place near which, as will be remembered, Mr Rose was captured. Some persons, thus far unknown, desiring to revenge themselves upon Signor Fiovani Rizzi, the chief inspector of police resident there, who has shown much firmness in the fulfilment of his duties, succeeding in secretly undermining his house, and placing powder beneath it blew it up while Signor Rizzi, his wife, and two sons were asleep in their beds. The explosion aroused the village, and by the energetic efforts of the police, aided by the populace, the victims were all got out alive from the ruins, and though severely hurt, without having received any mortal injury.

WEST CLIVE.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

August 6, 1877.

Notwithstanding the heavy fall of rain we had during last week, I am glad to say that the volume of water in the Nagaruroro has not very materially increased, in consequence of which we escaped from the much dreaded flood, and I hear of no damage being sustained through the disagreeable downpour of the aqueous element. True it had the effect of stopping nearly all out-door amusements, and to a certain extent, retarding business, which I have no doubt was the same in most places, therefore we have no right to complain but be thankful that we have escaped disaster.

There is a great deal of talk about having a grand masquerade ball and supper at Farndon during the current month. If it eventuates it will certainly be a novelty in the shape of amusements, and I have no doubt will be well patronised, and prove a great treat to the lovers of the "light fantastic" business.

Mr Alfred Danvers while shooting last week, shot a remarkably rare bird, so much so that only few of the oldest Maoris admitted that they had ever seen one before, and those who had seen any called it a "Mahu" or "Maho." Mr Hooper in Napier was the fortunate possessor of one, and Mr Danvers left the one he shot with that gentleman. The trio I understand are to be presented to the Athenæum. What a pity that some influential persons do not take the initiatory step towards forming a Museum worthy of the place.

Notwithstanding the outburst of sympathetic feeling by Mr Colenso the pigeon match advertised to take place will come off upon the day appointed, possibly to the disgust of the gentleman above alluded to.

It is rumored that a memorial is about to be got up and forwarded to Mr Sutton for presentation to the Assembly. The purport of the memorial is to limit owners to owning directly or indirectly more than one public-house under a penalty of £50 per day for so doing. Such is the law in Victoria, and I do not see why it should not be so here. If such was the law there cannot be a question that we should have a more palatable and wholesome beverage brewed.

The works at Merritt's corner, if intended to protect the railway, should be carried at least a chain further, otherwise the particularly prominent corner which is left unprotected will be washed away, and the river make an easy breach near to Merritt's pigstyes and thence across the line.

There is a doubt as to whether we have a policeman or not. In my last I mentioned that a memorial had been presented to Major Scully in favor of District Constable Graham remaining in his position. Up to the present no answer has been received, consequently the inhabitants are somewhat scared, particularly as the disappearance of saddles has become rather a prominent feature.

Mr. Bishop drove a splendid lot of cattle through this place yesterday for shipment to Auckland, per Southern Cross. There were about sixty head, and each and every one in the primest condition.

The picnic to be given by Mr. Giffard comes off to-morrow; there will be a great gathering of the children of the district, and ample preparation has been made for their enjoyment.

THE WAR IN THE EAST.

A DESCRIPTION OF TIRNOVA.

In the Agent-General's telegram published by us to-day, it is stated that a great battle was immediately expected to occur at Tirnova. As we may hourly receive news of the engagement, we append below a description of the place given by Colonel Baker:—"Plevna is twenty miles south of Nikopoli, and Selvi is nearly forty miles further along the same road, in the direction of the Balkans, but between these two places is the beautiful town of Lovtcha, through which the Russian army must pass to join the contingent at Selvi. Lovtcha is one of the quaintest and most picturesque places he had ever seen. It is a straggling town, built in a deep and winding cleft of basaltic rocks, which rise up in lofty and precipitous walls around, while trees and minarets thrust themselves up between the houses here and there, and add to the general effect. The rapid-flowing Osma, about 100 yards wide, runs through the town under the arches of a new stone bridge which would do credit to any country. The houses have overhanging eaves, and roofs covered with great irregular yellow slates more than an inch thick, and the pretty Bulgarian women, in their picturesque costumes, may be seen sitting at the doors of their houses, with their children spinning the woollen threads into household cloth. This is the territory which is to be devastated by war. A little further along the road, at the point where it junctions with the highway from Rustchuk, is the fortified town of Tirnova, within twenty miles of the foot of the Balkans, which must fall before the advancing arms of the Czar. Tirnova, like Lovtcha, is built in a great basaltic basin, with a rapid river—the Jantra—flowing through it, and which has such a winding course that it nearly makes an island of a great portion of the rock upon which stands the citadel. The depth of the cleft varies from 1000 to 500 feet. The houses are built on a plateau, and on the sides of the cliffs where they are sufficiently sloping to permit of it. Tirnova is a very strong position, but no advantage has been taken of the natural defences. It was formerly the seat of the Bulgarian kings after their power was driven north of the Balkans, and in those days it must, in a military sense, have been a position of great strength. The neighbouring country is prettily laid out with vineyards, gardens, orchards, and villas, which give it a familiar European aspect. Here and there portions of an old Roman highway, probably of the time of Trajan, are to be met with, paved with large flat stones, which still have the smooth polish, created by the ancient traffic, and the kerbstones along the edge look as though the road had but lately been repaired. The modern roads are hard and well-formed, and are described as the best met with outside London, so that there will be no obstacle in the nature of bad ground for the invaders to march over. The whole of the country between the places named is divided into large estates, belonging generally to Turkish Pashas and beys, whose families have inherited them for generations and the tenants and laborers are usually Bulgarian Christians."

NAPIER TO WAIPUKURAU RAILWAY.

Return of traffic for four weeks ending 30th June, 1877.

	£	s	d	£	s	d
Passengers (5,563)	765	9	1			
Parcels, &c	188	15	11			
Season Tickets	1	0	0			
				955	5	6
Goods (1,602 1/2)	984	18	10			
Total	£1,904	4	5			

PARLIAMENTARY.

WELLINGTON.

NOTICE OF MOTIONS.

August 3.

In the House yesterday, Mr. Sheehan presented a petition from A. Wilson, late Land Purchase Commissioner Poverty Bay, complaining of wrongful dismissal and asking for an inquiry.

Mr Swanson gave notice to move for the appointment of a Committee to consider the best means of aiding the beetroot sugar industry.

Mr O'Rorke gave notice of motion, that £5000 be voted in aid of public libraries, to be distributed pound for pound raised to the three principal libraries, and 10 to the others.

THE WAKA MAORI.

Mr Rees moved, "That this House is of opinion that it is unjust and unconstitutional for any Ministry to use the influence of the Government and the moneys of the State on their own authority for the purpose of defending an action brought by one citizen against another for an alleged libel; that, after the deliberate vote of this House in Committee last session in striking out the item asked by the Government for the Waka Maori newspaper, and the strong expression of opinion of this House that the Ministry should not support that paper as before, this House considers the conduct of the Government in still continuing to carry on the Waka Maori highly reprehensible."

The speaker moved the motion in a well filled House. He commenced by saying that there were circumstances under which the Government were bound to defend their servants when acting under the instructions of their employes in the performance of ordinary duties, but that would be in matters which could be fairly brought under the attention of the House. He would be able to show that the duties they were performing was unjust and unconstitutional. The Waka Maori on July 11th 1876, and August 8th 1876, while the House was in session, contained articles which were alleged to be libels by the Hon. Henry Russell. The subject matter of articles was reflection upon his character or articles which he supposed contained reflections. If he had not been a man of means and determination, he might not have been able to defend his character. In the month of August there appeared another article which was alleged to be a libel. He (Mr. Rees) did not know whether the Ministry themselves considered these articles before they were put in the Waka Maori, but the Attorney-General had stated in the House that defendants in this action were simply acting as servants of the Government. But could that protect a public servant in all cases, and give him a claim upon the Government to defend him? For instance, a public servant commits an assault or any wrong against a private citizen, and that private citizen brings him into Court, ought the whole Government influence, and Government money to be used against him. If such were the case the individuals who desired to protect themselves against the wrong, would find that that would be opposed by the whole power and influence of the State, which would be an invasion of the very principles of the Great Charter under which we hold our liberty, and against the first principles of the law. It must be held the persons who published the alleged libels in the Waka Maori were acting under the influence of Government. The action was defended on a plea of justification put upon record, which means that defendants were justified in what they did in any attack upon the Hon. Henry Russell's character; any imputation against his honesty; any aspersions they have cast upon him they were justified, and that they were prepared to show in a competent tribunal. If the printers and publishers were justified in what they were doing, they should have been left to defend themselves, and if proved they were not justified in a Court of law then the Ministry could come to the House and say our servants have been cast in an action for damages in the discharge of their duties, we ask you to reimburse us with costs. But the Government not only supplies funds, but uses the whole machinery of the Government in order, not only to defend their servants, but actually with enormous expense and the employment of machinery at their disposal to endeavor to fasten the charges they made upon Mr Russell. (Applause.) Costs had been proceeded with at not less than one hundred pounds a day. (Sensation.) He did not know whether the Government were contributing this money out of their own pockets, or the money of the State, but only that the influence of the Government was being used for this purpose. The Government have no right

to keep a newspaper which is a libellous publication. They have a right to have a paper which contains information for the State or people in it, but it has no right to have newspapers professing to be printed by the State which can be made a vehicle for a calumnious attack upon private individuals, especially against members of the Legislature who are political opponents for the time being. However fairly people are inclined to Ministers—however fairly disposed to judge what is right—what men of unbiased minds would hesitate before they attempt to justify a Ministry in keeping up at the expense of the State journals whose columns, from time to time, contained calumnious attacks upon their opponents in the Legislature? Were such things permitted to exist, private persons would be at the mercy of the Ministry, backed up by a majority of the House, and at the mercy of the influence and means of the State. It is necessary there should be a Government Gazette containing information for the native race, but the publication of a libellous attack in such papers is a breach of the law of the land. If members of the Government are responsible for libels appearing in the Waka Maori, then they could be placed in the dock as criminals. This principle is commonly recognised in Courts. From time to time owners of papers are subject to civil or criminal prosecutions and rightfully so, because it is the only remedy which the law gives. Suppose a jury found these letters libellous and assess damages in favor of Mr Russell the costs would be enormous. Would the Government ask the House to vote the costs? He did not think any member of this House would for one moment support the Government to carry on a newspaper to libel opponents of the Government. He might for instance be singled out for a libel action. He would put the case to any man of feeling in the House. Ought the Government be allowed to conduct a paper to libel him grossly, and is he to have no remedy? Such a thing is abhorrent to every sense of justice. He was sure if members of the Government thought the matter over, they would not have taken the course which had been taken in relation to this case. When the Government saw the matter in the paper they might have made a gentlemanly apology, and it would have been accepted. Instead of that, a plea of justification had been put upon the records, and Mr Russell was obliged to go into a Court of law to substantiate his case. If Mr Russell had not gone into the law courts, he must have practically admitted these libels were true. If he had not taken this step, he must have acquiesced in the charges made against him. Now the expenses on each side are amounting to £100 a day. A Commission is sitting in Napier. There are about fifty Maori witnesses. One witness occupied four days in examination. The native officers were scouring the country and collecting evidence in respect to this case. Such libels might be circulated against any man if such a system was permitted to continue. If a man lived in any country where German and French were spoken, could it be contended that a libel ought to be permitted to be circulated against individuals half in each language? If such were permitted, and the sufferer not a man of wealth and determination, he must succumb. He was told that day that there was not the slightest use in moving this, because members must vote against it because it was a vote of censure upon the Ministry. They said the majority was sure to vote against him because Ministers would regard it as a vote of censure, and if carried they could not sit. He would be sorry if any member of the Ministry should attempt to defend such a course. Whether this was a vote of censure upon the Ministry or not, he certainly did not intend it so. If he did not believe the thing to be right, he should not move it. He simply asked the House to endorse these opinions, and it could then exercise its discretion. He only wished he could, by the votes of that House, elicit really the sentiments of hon. members without respect to questions of policy. Coming to the second resolution, the House last year struck out a vote for the Waka Maori. By that vote the House virtually affirmed the principle, if it was to be a newspaper for the Maori people, that it should be self-supporting. It was said, why should the country pay for a paper which is used as a Government organ. Members of the House perceived that it was so used, and unmistakably a vote of the House was taken after the subject had been fairly debated. They had been told that they must yield to the ease of the majority. The majority of the House might be of a certain opinion, or might be on some considerations open to

the support of the Government (looking at the Canterbury members), only it was fair to get the sense of the House whether the Government did right or wrong in adopting the course which seemed to strike at the basis of all constitutional government. (Applause.)

Mr Whitaker rose.

Mr Stout rose and suggested an adjournment.

The Speaker said the Attorney-General was in possession of the House.

Mr Rees, pointing to the clock:—It is half-past five o'clock.

Mr Whitaker: We considered in the first instance whether the question as to whether the Government defrayed the expenses in this action was a proper question to be answered. When the proceedings were conducted in the Supreme Court certain interrogations were put to witnesses as to who was paying cost. He read questions whether they or any of them were indemnified; whether any person or persons promised to agree they should be indemnified by any person or persons.

Cries of "Time."

Mr Whitaker: The judge would not allow the question to be put.

Cries of "Time."

The Speaker:—I will resume the chair at half-past seven.

Mr Rees' motion is not likely to be carried in its present shape.

Many members are averse to ousting the Ministry. Southern members do not care to understand the question. They never did or will understand Native affairs.

The House was adjourned at seven thirty to attend the Hon. Mr McLean's Ball.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

August 4.

In the House yesterday Mr Fox gave notice of motion for the papers relative to the payment of £4000 to the Rangitiki natives in excess of the appropriation made.

Captain Russell gave notice of motion to ask whether the Government will introduce, or support during the present session a Bill to make copyright of works of art; also, whether the Government will inaugurate a system of parcels by post similar to that between England and India.

Mr Karaitiana gave notice of motion to ask whether the Government intend to make the Native Lands Bill a Government question, and whether if thrown out on the second, reading they will resign.

LIVELY DEBATES.

The House was in a chaffy humor yesterday.

The debates abounded with *bon mots* and puns.

PASTE AND SCISSORS MEASURE.

The second reading of the Sheep and Cattle Bill, which Mr Seymour characterised as a paste and scissors measure, was agreed to, and the Bill referred to a Select Committee.

The Slaughterhouse Bill was read a second time, and remitted to a Select Committee.

EDUCATION BILL.

The Hon Mr Bowen resumed the debate on the second reading of the Education Bill.

Mr Bastings wanted a further adjournment to enable the measure to be circulated throughout the country.

Mr Macandrew mischievously suggested the Bill be sent to a Select Committee. This proposal created great laughter.

During the debate, Mr Rees characterised Mr Wason, the Government whip, as an overgrown schoolboy, who wanted to be the big brother of the Ministry.

Mr Wakefield said he was surprised that Ministers, virtually under a vote of censure, should endeavor to proceed with other business.

Sir G Grey and Mr Rees cheered.

Mr Wakefield continued:—"Where would Ministers be if the resolutions, *re* Waka Maori, were carried? Relegated to the limbo of the departed."

The amendment for the adjournment was carried on the voices.

The second reading was postponed of the Charitable Institutions Bill.

TALKING OUT THE HOUSE.

On the motion for going into Committee of Supply, Sir G. Grey challenged the Government to proceed with Mr Rees' resolution. Mr Rees followed. Suddenly arose Mr Woolcock; and armed with voluminous notes, proceeded to descant on the necessity for a change in the incidence of taxation. He gradually almost emptied the House, but kept calmly steadily on, and talked until ten o'clock, when the Speaker left the chair for half an hour.

Scene in the House.

When the Speaker resumed his chair, signs of a coming war were apparent. During the half hour, the Ministerial supporters urged the Premier to boldly to meet the Opposition on Rees' motion, and declare it a Ministerial question. The Government hoped to snatch a victory from the unorganised Opposition, or compel them to shew their cards. Consequently, the Premier made a Ministerial Statement that after Mr. Wakefield's statement (which was cheered by Sir G. Grey and Mr. Rees), the Government called upon the Opposition leader to declare whether Mr. Rees' resolutions were intended as a want of confidence motion. The Government were prepared to fight the matter out.

After a brief significant silence, the irrepressible Stout rose and chafed the Premier on having laid down a new doctrine. It was the duty of the Government and not the Opposition to decide what it would regard as a no-confidence motion. Amidst great laughter, Stout suggested the Government to refer the resolutions to a Select Committee.

Mr Whitaker, in an incisive speech, endeavored to throw the onus of precipitating a no-confidence motion on Sir G. Grey and Mr Rees.

Mr Sheehan, who, taking a position on the benches opposite the Government near the door to the lobby, said Mr Rees had tabled the motion without consulting Sir G. Grey or anyone. It was not a party question, and should not be taken out of the ordinary course.

Mr Reid, in reply, created much laughter by letting the cat out of the bag in saying, "we do not know what gentlemen of the Opposition are. They are all around us." This is generally believed to imply the Government scents danger in the cautious and reticent policy of the Opposition. They see black clouds overhead, and do not know when they will break.

Mr DeLator charged the Ministry with cockadoodleoism. They wanted a lion to fight, and expected Mr Wakefield to be the lion, when he was only a lamb.

Mr Gisborne quoted the House of Commons practice, and spouted political lore. He said no Ministry could with dignity retain their seats if the resolution were carried.

Mr Thomson in a solemn pawky-Scotch gravity manner delivered a most humorous speech. He said the House should return to its mutton; Woolcock's little game, viz., incidence of taxation, and said 120 men in New Zealand owned twelve million acres, worth twenty-five millions.

The Hon Mr. McLean jumped up in his seat as if electrified.

Mr. Thomson, Aye, mon, it is a vera great sum. (Great Laughter.) Suppose the Ministry put a tax on this twelve million acres of land, it would add to the revenue twenty-five per cent. He claimed credit for giving Government a wrinkle.

Mr Bastings (solemnly): I rise in all seriousness. (Roars of laughter.)

Mr McLean, in a wheedling speech, requested the Opposition to come on.

Mr Fisher, in the course of a slashing attack, characterised the Premier as a political highwayman.

Mr Lumsden said it was a Ministry of Treasury Bills. Any six men picked up in the street could manage as well with unlimited borrowing powers.

Mr Rees then launched out into a philippic against the Ministry. He said he had tabled the resolutions without consulting anyone. He did not care whether they were carried or not. He believed them right himself, and did not care what the world thought. He lashed himself into an oratorical fury and severely criticised the financial statement. He charged the Government with making fallacious representations regarding New Zealand finances in the London Times when a loan was contemplated.

He got called to order by the Speaker.

Mr Stout was meantime intrenching himself behind a formidable array of Blue Books, was we understood to be preparing to speak against time, or till his breath gave out.

Mr J. C. Brown moved the adjournment of the debate.

It was adjourned at 1.45 until 7.30 on Tuesday.

The Opposition gained its point by avoiding a pitched battle on a bad ground and staving off a division.

The Government were palpably disappointed at being foiled.

THE AGENT-GENERALSHIP.

Mr Macandrew asked the question whether the Government intended to dispense with the services of Sir Julius Vogel, such being rumored in the Press.

Mr Macandrew said it was desirable that the matter should be set at rest.

The Premier said the conditions under which Sir J. Vogel accepted the appointment of the Agent-Generalship was that the appointment was to cease at the end of the year. Neither Sir J. Vogel nor the Government desired the engagement should continue longer. Government fully recognised his services, and when the vote for the expenses of the Agent-General's Department comes on, he would be prepared to state distinctly what are the proposals of the Government on the subject.

NATIVE LANDS BILL.

August 7,

The motion for the second reading of the Native Lands Bill will be met by a resolution asking that it be withdrawn and redrafted so as to give small capitalists a chance of acquiring land for bona fide settlement. A close division is expected.

WELLINGTON.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

July 26, 1877.

Yesterday there were one or two slight skirmishes, the first of which was on a motion of Sir G. Grey's—to add Mr Sheehan's name to the Native Committee. This was moved in a few well-chosen remarks, and replied to by the Premier, who stated the objection of the Government to be that the member for Rodney was so much mixed up in these matters that it was placing him in an unfair position. Mr Reader Wood followed, charging the Government with having arranged all the Committees to suit themselves, and calling on the House to assert its rights. Mr Reid followed, and in a short, but pointed speech, complained that the action of Mr Sheehan last year on the Committee had been complained of even on the floor of the House, and that it was a matter of notoriety that he was largely interested in questions before that Committee. Several members—Karaitiana, Carrington, Macandrew, and others—spoke, and the motion was carried on the voices. A division was called for but not taken.

Mr De Latour objected to the proposal of the Government to add another Canterbury name to the Waste Lands Committee, and contended that there being already four Canterbury members on it, the House should not consent. Unfortunately for the speaker, his premises were wrong, as the last Committee contained only two Canterbury names. Sir George Grey thought he saw a chance for another triumph, and made an earnest appeal to be placed on the Committee, or, at all events, to have another Auckland member there. He was followed by Mr Reid, who told the House that, although Sir George had been on that Committee last year, he had never attended to it, and that the Government had been anxious to have names upon these important Committees who would work, and who represented as far as possible the different sections of the community. The result was that the Government carried the point without a division.

I do not think there is anything to record in reference to your members. Captain Russell has not yet spoken, and neither has Mr Sutton since the address in reply. Mr Sutton sits in an inconvenient place for reporters, as we cannot see him.

There is, apparently, no cohesion among the Opposition as yet. Sir George and Mr Gisborne are often together and appear to be hatching something. There is some talk of Mr Gisborne leading, but the arrangements, if made, have not leaked out. Gisborne is more dreary and prosy than he used to be.

The Financial Statement is expected to be made to-morrow, and probably shortly thereafter some combination will be made.

There is not much talk about Separation, in fact it is hard to tell what is the programme.

Mr Rees has arrived, and there are now not more than six members absent; Mr Stout is one of them. Probably next week there will be more news.

HARBOR BOARD.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 7.

The Board met at 11 o'clock to-day. Present—Messrs Kinross (chairman), Vautier, Kennedy, Robjohns, Williams, Smith, Newman, and Rhodes.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Letters were read from Mr. Seed asking for information respecting the harbor lights; and from Messrs Banner and Liddle, informing the Board of the dissolution of the firm of Margoliouth and

Banner, and of the intention of the new firm to carry out the original contract with the Board respecting conduct of auction sales.

A letter from the Collector of Customs called the attention of the Board to the fact that the effect of raising the road has been to leave the Searching Shed C. some fifteen inches below the level.

A letter was handed in from Mr. Margoliouth on the same subject as that on which Messrs Banner and Liddle had addressed the Board.

A letter was read from the Board's Engineer relative to the drainage of the section on which the Searching Shed C. is situated.

On the motion of Mr. Vautier, the Engineer was instructed to call for tenders to raise the Shed the required height.

Mr. Rhodes called the attention of the Board, to the proprietorship of the section on which the shed is situated. It did not belong to the Board, and he thought immediate steps should be taken to obtain it.

The Secretary was instructed accordingly.

The Engineer's progress report was read. It spoke confidently of the future success of the works as bearing on the permanent improvement of the harbor. The position of the works is as follows:—Of the eastern pier 498 feet of the single work are completed, leaving 102 feet of single work and 400 feet of double work to do. Of the western pier 162 feet of single work are finished, leaving 483 feet of single and 200 feet of double work to be done.

A letter was read from the Manager of the Bank of Australasia in reference to the payment of interest at London on the Harbor Board's coupons, and recommended that the London agent of the Board be kept in funds for the purpose.

The Secretary stated that he had discovered an error in the Bank's calculation of interest of £128, which the Manager had agreed to refund, and place to the credit of the Board.

Accounts were passed and ordered to be paid.

The Secretary handed to the Chairman the only tender for the leasing of the Spit ferry that had been received.

A petition was read from Petane settlers stating that they would be satisfied with an hourly steam ferry service.

The tender was then opened and found to be from Messrs. Holmes Brothers, of Auckland, who proposed to place a 16 horse-power paddle steamer on the ferry, capable of carrying 100 passengers, with a draft of 2 feet 6 inches; charging freight of 3s per ton for goods; commencing hourly service on or about September 1st next, and continuing it for five years, requiring no subsidy.

It being understood that Messrs Holmes were about to bring their vessel to Napier, the Board agreed to accept the tender, subject to the vessel proving suitable for the work, and according to description given.

A resolution was carried raising the salary of the Secretary to £200.

The Board then adjourned.

AD VALOREM DUTIES.

(Lyttelton Times, July 16.)

Sooner or later—and the sooner the better—the present system of *ad valorem* duties must be re-considered by the Legislature. That system has practically been in full operation for three years, and it has become a Sinking Fund of revenue. As we have shown in an article on the subject of Customs' receipts in our issue on May 18, the decrease in *ad valorem* duties this financial year will be approximately £26,036, in comparison with last year, and during last year the decrease was actually £37,906 in comparison with the preceding year. It thus appears that notwithstanding all our increase of imported population, and all our expenditure of millions of borrowed money during the last three years, we shall receive this year in *ad valorem* duties less by £13,942 than we received in the year 1874-5. Moreover, during the same triennial period, the proceeds of four other principal items of Customs' duties showed a considerable increase. From spirits, we have received an increase of £7,745. From tobacco, an increase of £16,070. From tea an increase of £8849. From sugar, an increase of £16,361. These are significant facts, and though the calculations are only approximate so far as the quarter just ended on June 30 is concerned, we do not think that the actual receipts for that quarter, when they are published, will make any appreciable difference in an adverse direction. When we consider the length of time over which these calculations extend, the great increase of population,

and the lavish public expenditure which contemporaneously took place, it is in vain, we think, to account for this exceptional decrease of *ad valorem* duties by reference to overstocks, or to diminutions in England prices, of certain goods on which those duties were collected. Evade and argue round about the question as we may, we are met face to face by the fact that the system of duties on which Sir Julius Vogel admittedly relied as an increasing source of revenue, has been for three years essentially a failing one. The real, the incontrovertible cause of that failure is the vicious principle, in practice, of that system of import duties. Had Sir Julius Vogel known more about political economy, and shown more anxiety to learn from the experience of other countries and from great English financiers, than to steal what he thought a clever march on the pockets of taxpayers in this colony, he would never have resorted to a system which is exploded everywhere, we believe, except in Victoria, a Colony notorious for its fiscal vagaries.

Even in New Zealand, brief as is its political history, the *ad valorem* system had, many years ago, been tried and abolished. In 1849, a Committee of the Legislative Council at Wellington, including among its members Mr George Hunter the present member for that City, expressed an unanimous opinion "that a system of fixed duties, to as wide an extent as practicable, will be found to be more productive to the revenue, and more beneficial to the public interest than the present system of *ad valorem* duties." In the following year, when our own settlement was in its earliest infancy the Legislature substituted a system of fixed for *ad valorem* duties. Certainly, however much we have grown materially since that date, we have not correspondingly grown in the knowledge of financial economy. That small assembly of lawgivers would have been astonished to have then known that in five-and-twenty years the wisdom of posterity would revert to the system then abolished, but there would be some consolation in the thought that in three years more experience has fully borne out the statement that the system of fixed duties is "more productive to the revenue, more protective to the fair trader, and more beneficial to the public interest."

It is remarkable, and speaks well for the precocious wisdom of the youngest Colony, that two or three years after the abolition of *ad valorem* duties in New Zealand, England followed the example. In the House of Commons in 1853, Mr. Mitchell drew special attention to *ad valorem* duties. "He had," he said, "presided last year over a Committee which had recommended in the strongest terms the abolition of these duties. That Committee included among its members the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, a former Chancellor of the Exchequer, and several other high officials, and it was their unanimous opinion that *ad valorem* duties ought to be at once and entirely abolished." Again,—“Reverting to these *ad valorem* duties, he would repeat that they were open to every species of objection. The Committee had before them Sir Alexander Spearman, Sir Thomas Freemantle, and others, all of whom stated that the trouble and annoyance given by their existence was such, that they doubted whether the expense of the Custom-house staff thus rendered necessary was not equivalent to the cost of the duties themselves. These duties placed a very great temptation in the way of the inferior officers of the Customs.

* * * Another result of the system was that the uncertainty entailed by it had taken the trade out of the hands of the respectable merchants, and had put it into those of the lowest class of traders." In his reply, Mr. Gladstone, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, spoke in the following terms on this subject:—"I concur with the hon member for Bridport (Mr. Mitchell) in thinking that the system of *ad valorem* import duties as such is highly objectionable. Undoubtedly there may be cases where public policy will not allow of it, and therefore I do not mean to lay down any universal or sweeping provision; but I accede to the doctrine that the system of *ad valorem* import duties on manufactured articles is highly inconvenient, that it greatly tends to demoralisation of the operations of trade." Coming from so high an authority, this uncontradicted opinion should, we think, be conclusive on the question at issue; and Mr. Gladstone did not confine himself to mere opinion. In that same year he stated in his Budget that the Government desired, "whenever it can be done, to take the mode of substituting rated duties for duties *ad valorem*;" and he carried that reform into effect, and since that date no

one in the Imperial Parliament has ventured to propose the re-imposition of *ad valorem* duties.

If the example of Sir George Grey in New Zealand, who was Governor when *ad valorem* was abolished, and that of Mr Gladstone in England have no influence on the mind of our Premier, surely as Colonial Treasurer he will not be impenetrable to the conviction that the present system is actually from year to year creating a growing deficiency in our revenue. He may sneer at Sir George Grey, and differ from Mr Gladstone, but the argument supplied by a decrease of coin must, we should imagine, be to him in that capacity irresistible. There are two courses open to him. If he believes in the *ad valorem* system, and is of opinion that it is good at heart though a little eccentric at present in its outward behaviour, he should, if he can get a majority in the House of Representatives to agree with him, let things go on as they are, and wait in patience and hope for that good time coming, when the *ad valorem* system increases the revenue, is just to the fair trader, and encourages commercial morality. If he does not believe in the system, but is of opinion that it has, in the production of revenue, a constant downward tendency, and that it is unfair and demoralising, he should lose no time in submitting to the Legislature a measure for its abolition, and for the substitution of a better system. Even if he were not prepared at present for a revision of our general taxation, it is arrant folly to persist any longer than is absolutely indispensable in a course which artificially lessens an already naturally diminishing revenue, and which defrauds the Treasurer sitting at the receipt of custom.

At the laying of the foundation stone of an Odd Fellows Hall at Kaiapoi last week, the Provincial Grand Master of the Canterbury District in a speech delivered on the occasion made the following appropriate remarks:—"I have been told that in a certain town in this Province, and in one particular department, it is the custom when a new hand is taken on, to ask him if he is a member of any benefit society, and he is advised to join one if he is not. He is also given to understand that in the event of either sickness or death occurring, and the warning having been neglected, he must not expect his fellow workmen to bear the burden of supporting him or his family by subscriptions. If this plan were more generally adopted, it would tend to make many careless men think more seriously of these matters, and there would be fewer subscription lists than there are at present, in aid of destitute women and children. To the ladies, I would beg to say a few words. I am glad to see so many here to-day to encourage us in our work. I have heard that ladies object to their husbands joining Friendly Societies on account of the time it takes attending Lodge meetings. And, again, in celebrating an anniversary, we are told that we are selfish in not inviting you to join more in our meetings and telling you our secrets. First then let me tell you we have no secrets which would interest you. The signs and tokens of the different degrees denote our rank among the brethren of the Order, and secondly it is the general wish of our members that our wives and lady friends should enjoy the privilege of attending our anniversaries. As to the time occupied by the members in attending to Lodge duties, Oddfellowship would not be what it now is unless the members took a lively interest in it, and again the benefit to be derived is chiefly for your own good. It does not follow that because a man is an Oddfellow that he will be sick or die the sooner, but being one he is certain of relief should either sickness or death occur."

The New Zealand Times says a man called at a certain boarding-house in town the other day and, having rung the bell, asked to see the landlord. He was told the landlord was engaged, but on being asked if the landlady would, said she would,—very nicely, indeed. The landlady was therefore summoned and came out, expecting doubtless to have the pleasure of receiving a new lodger but was rather taken aback by seeing a stranger, who asked for the "loan of half-a-crown." Thinking perhaps some explanation necessary, he remarked that he used to stay in her house. This the lady, having searchingly scanned her visitor's face, strenuously refused to credit, perhaps rather believing her own eyes than the gentleman's story. Nothing abashed however the individual in question persisted that the lady's memory must be short—couldn't she remember his having stayed there? Certainly it was only for one night; but still she couldn't have forgotten him. He only wanted 2s 6d to pay for the removal of his luggage, as he was taking it to a house near at hand, and (producing a shilling and a few coppers) had not quite enough to pay the expressman. The landlady, however, was not to be shaken in her own opinion as to the man being a perfect stranger to her and a barefaced impostor, and accordingly wisely dismissed him with the advice to procure the money from the parties whom he was about to honor with his patronage.

