

Radicals. He described the Church as pursuing a policy of grab. It was had enough in China and Africa, but was untenable in the field of education. The motion was negatived by 155 votes to 57.

SOMALILAND.

Although the Mullah's forces are increasing largely in Somaliland it is believed that they are only half to be depended upon. His bodyguard consists of a thousand outlaws and murderers.

It is reported at Berbera that the Mad Mullah has been assassinated while at prayers, being killed by spear thrusts in his stomach.

Everything is ready at Berbera for an immediate advance against the Mullah, via Garroo and Obbia, the columns meeting early in February for a combined movement.

AUSTRALIA.

At the stock sales no New Zealand sheep were offered. Eighteen bullocks averaged £16 6/.

A severe earthquake shock has occurred at Hallett. No damage was done.

The Mount Morgan gold mine has struck payable stone 170 feet below any previous level.

Two concerts given on the steamer Furco resulted in over £15 being raised for the Elingamite fund.

Carill has put up a new world's swimming record for 100yds, doing the distance in 58sec in Sydney.

In the Victorian Assembly the clause in the Reform Bill giving the franchise to women was adopted by 53 to 25.

The Rev. Matthew Walker, sentenced in July to six months' imprisonment for perjury, and subsequently sentenced to an additional two months for refusing to give evidence, has been released.

The Boer farmer delegates who recently visited Canada are passengers by the s.s. Miowers from Vancouver. The Government will afford them facilities to visit the farming centres.

The Boer delegates, after visiting the other States, proceed to New Zealand. It is stated that their idea is to buy stock here, to replenish Boer farms.

The proprietor and publisher of the "Age" have been each fined £85 for contempt of Court in publishing on October 4 an article calculated to impede the fair trial of A. R. Worthington, on a charge of false pretences. In the matter of John Norton, for publishing a similar article in the "Sydney Truth," Mr Justice Holroyd said he had no jurisdiction, and discharged the rule nisi, but without costs.

An all-night sitting in the New South Wales Assembly terminated in a scene of wild disorder, owing to the Government forcing Treasury bills through. Some very forcible language and epithets were used, and members freely challenged each other. Two Ministers were especially prominent. One was compelled to apologise to the House. The bill was eventually passed.

Messrs Burns, Philip and Co.'s manager in New Guinea states that the white population is gradually decreasing. Everything is unsettled, and there will be no improvement till the attitude of the Commonwealth is known. Most of those who have gone into small land speculations have abandoned them.

Mr Mills, of the Union Steamship Company last week entertained the delegates to the shipowners' conference and representatives of all the Australian shipping companies at luncheon. The Attorney-General (Mr Wise) in proposing the toast of the Union Company, emphasised it as an institution of which all Australians were proud. Bishop Doyle supported Mr Wise's remarks.

Three men committed suicide in Melbourne last week. One named Weir hanged himself to escape financial worry. The second, named Lewis, under the influence of liquor, swallowed leadenware and strychnine. The third, Montgomery, jumped off the Yarra bridge. He left a letter stating he could not

endure his wretched life no longer, and wanted to see the unknown.

An action against the New Zealand Accident Insurance Company to recover £1000 on the policy of John Hoogklimmer, found dead in his bedroom with the gas turned on, resulted in a verdict for the defendant. The jury found that the man committed suicide.

Four inches of rain have fallen at Dugandis. The railway has been damaged, and the flooded creeks have stopped the Hughenden-Cloacurry coaches. The Mount Morgan dams have been replenished. For months the place has been dependent on outside supply.

Mr David Mills, of the Union Steamship Company, interviewed Sir E. Barton in reference to the renewal of the Vancouver mail subsidy, which expires in May. The negotiations at present are private, but it is understood that the question of arranging the subsidy on a new basis was raised, and incidental thereto the improvement of the service by introducing a superior class of steamers running at a higher speed.

The steamer Australian, from China, when in latitude 10 degrees south, on her way through the Arafura Sea from Timor to Port Darwin (Northern Australia) ran into a peculiar thick haze, which continued until she reached the Australian coast. So dense was the haze that it was impossible to discern objects a mile or two ahead. It is evidently the result of some recent volcanic action.

The steamer Miowers, which has arrived at Brisbane from Vancouver last week, brought a hundred tons of frozen pork, shipped by the British Columbia Gold Storage Company and the Armour Company. Canadian papers state that this is an initial shipment. The storage company's representative in Australia has sent orders ahead for similar quantities for the next four months. The steamer sailing from Vancouver in December will take 70 tons of frozen meat. The company have also arranged to forward shipments of grain, frozen salmon and Canadian butter, and intend to charter a ship to carry 2500 tons of wheat.

The Full Court, consisting of the chief and three other justices, heard the appeal against the conviction of the Kenniffs, who were lately sentenced to death for the murder of Mr Dalke and Constable Doyle. The grounds of appeal were that there was no evidence of Doyle's death, and no evidence that Patrick and James Kenniff acted in concert. The Court upheld the conviction. Mr Justice Real dissenting. He said there was sufficient evidence that Doyle was dead, but no evidence to support the theory that James Kenniff took part in the murder, unless they accepted the conjecture that he would naturally help his brother. His presence on the scene was involuntary, he being at the time a prisoner in Doyle's custody.

The Council discussed the exclusion of the felt-hatters. Members severely condemned the action of the Federal Government in applying the Immigration Restriction Act to such a case.

Mr G. H. Reid, speaking at Maitland, scathingly denounced Sir E. Barton's attitude on the latter difficulty. He said there was a point on which Australians could neither forgive nor forget. That was when statesmen filing high offices administered the law so as to attract the ridicule and odium of the whole British Empire.

Sir E. Barton in a minute on the hatters difficulty points out that no application for exemption was made till the 10th. The application was opposed by the president and secretary of the Australasian Association of Felt-hatters, and Sir E. Barton expressed regret that the application was made so late.

The annual meeting of the Kauni Timber Co. was held last week. The profits for the year were £21,200, which, added to the balance of £14,685, has been used in paying off the balance of debenture expenses. A dividend of 5 per cent. was declared, and £21,200 carried forward. The

chairman announced that the directors had decided to provide for the value of the timber taken off the company's land during the year, which absorbed £15,854. The idea was to bring the company's assets within realisable limits by the time the forests had been worked out. The liabilities of the company were now £283,000, including £226,000 on debentures, or a decrease of £30,000. The liquid assets were £344,000 including stocks worth £235,000. There was a surplus therefore of £60,000, which had to be added to the value of the mills and land. The directors and auditors were re-elected.

The action brought by Mr Griffiths (member for Waratah, and secretary of the Parliamentary Labour party) against the Newcastle "Morning Herald," claiming £1000 damages for alleged libel, resulted in a verdict for the defendant newspaper. The alleged libel was contained in an extract from the speeches of Mr Griffiths' opponent during the election campaign, wherein the plaintiff was accused of neo-Boerism, disloyalty, and sedition, and denounced as a traitor, and the "Herald's" comments thereon. Mr Justice Fring, in summing up, said the case involved a question affecting not only Australia, but the whole British Empire. He dealt severely with Mr Griffiths' pro-Boer utterances and his connection with the Anti-War League, and said a member of Parliament should be free from the faintest suspicion of disloyalty to his Sovereign. Commenting on the verdict, the judge declared that he unhesitatingly concurred in the jury's finding. He could not understand how any man, after making such speeches in public, could expect any other verdict. An application to stay proceedings on the ground that certain passages in the alleged libel did not come under the category of fair comment, was refused.

Henry Jordan, who is alleged to have averaged about one burglary a day for the past month in Melbourne, has been committed for trial for his many offences. He was quite an artist at his adopted profession. One of his rules was never to leave the premises he had robbed until he had got something to eat. At Mr Agar Wynne's, having secured a large swag of valuables, he laid the cloth on the dining-room table, set out some chicken, cut glass, and a bottle of wine, and having wound up a good meal by silently drinking his own health, went happily away. At Dr. Wheeler's, he picked up a choice collection of valuables, and then retired to the kitchen to recuperate after his arduous labours. He lighted the fire, boiled the kettle for a cup of tea, and, judging by the look of the table afterwards, thoroughly enjoyed himself. He was out in the back yard blacking his boots, and whistling a tune, when Dr. Wheeler happened to look out of the upstairs window. "What are you doing there?" called the doctor. "Go-

ing for a run," replied the burglar, and he trotted off as quick as a hare with only one boot polished.

THE AUSTRALIAN DROUGHT.

In the Sydney Assembly Mr Carruthers moved that in view of the serious effect of the drought, and the failure of the wheat, the Government ought to make provision for temporary rebate on payment of duties on breadstuffs and fodder, as far as practicable, and for the importation, on proper guarantee for payment thereof, of breadstuffs and fodder. He referred to Mr Seddon's offer to send fodder and eulogised this action.

Mr Carruthers said there was nothing to prevent the Government refunding the duties on breadstuffs and fodder at once in anticipation of getting it returned from the Federal Government or undertaking a refund of duties on importers entering into bonds to sell at a certain margin above the landed price. Referring to Mr Seddon's offer, he said Mr Seddon was evidently a man who could occasionally rise to meet questions on broad humanitarian grounds.

The Premier, in reply, read the opinion of the Attorney-General, to the effect that the remission of fodder duties would be a violation of the law of the Commonwealth. If anyone had asked him under a proper guarantee to import fodder he would have given every facility, but no request had been made. He declared that Mr Carruthers' proposal would lead to interminable difficulty, and involve the country in the loss of hundreds of thousands of pounds. The only way to give the consumer the benefit would be to abolish the duties. Mr Seddon's offer was a capital business move. He would tell him that if it could be availed of with advantage to the people of New South Wales he would avail himself of the offer.

Eventually, after a good deal of squabbling, and several applications of the closure, an amendment moved by Mr Webster, that if the necessity arises the Government should import breadstuffs and fodder and sell them at reasonable rates, was carried on the voices.

In addition to the New Zealand Government paying freight on fodder for the relief of sufferers by the drought in Australia, they will give free railway carriage to all such stuff to the chief ports of the colony.

The Premier, in the course of an interview with a representative of the "Lyttelton Times" last week, referring to the dearth in Australia, said if farmers and other producers in New Zealand were willing to send fodder and seed to Australia to help the sufferers by the drought, the Government would pay the freight, attend to details, and forward the stuff to the respective State Governments. He thinks that this would be merely a neighbourly action on the part of New Zealand, and as such



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