

The Tichborne Claimant has been found guilty, and sentenced to fourteen years' imprisonment.

NEWS BY THE CALIFORNIAN MAIL.

ENGLAND.

Mr J. L. WRIGHT, of Birmingham, has received a letter from the Minister of Immigration, New Zealand, offering to grant passages to a selected number of agricultural laborers, and inviting Mr Arch to visit New Zealand.

During January, ten ships left with immigrants for New Zealand, and eleven others were to follow in February. About 2500 souls are to be despatched per month. The Kent Agricultural Laborers' Union sent 200 adults, per William Davie, for Otago; and 75 in the Wellington, for Wellington. Previous to their departure a grand entertainment was given, at which 1600 persons were present.

AMERICA.

There was great excitement at San Francisco the day the steamer left. The evening papers are in demand at one dollar and upwards, owing to a personal difficulty between two editors and their friends. It ended in a general shooting match all round.

In New York, 10,000 dollars were paid for holding a *post mortem* examination on the Siamese twins.

KANDAVU.

The Macgregor is jammed into a coral reef at Kandavu, and it is very doubtful if she can be got off, after the failure of the powerful attempts made.

HONOLULU.

There was great excitement in Honolulu, ending in an attack of the natives on the Legislative Chamber, smashing everying, even cutting and destroying the records. Many members were wounded, several supposed mortally, and the remainder obliged to take refuge above the ceiling till finally relieved by the marines and sailors from one of the British and two American men-of-war in harbour. The relief came just in time to save the building from being fired and members being burned with it. The scene is described as savage and wild in the extreme. Crowds of mad natives dragging out members and others who had supported the election of a King; beating and trampling on them in the streets, smashing carriages and everything near. The cause of the excitement is the opposition to the election of a King; the natives wanting Queen Emma instead. The riot began at two o'clock and lasted till six o'clock, when the Macgregor left. There are no published accounts, but the intelligence is perfectly reliable.

FIJI.

The 'Star's' correspondent, writing from Levuka, March 2nd, says that annexation is now counted a certainty. The natives are all favourable. The commodore is at Bau, the royal residence, where all the chiefs are congregated, and where all the terms of annexation are being agreed upon.

AUSTRALIA.

MELBOURNE, February 28.—The Victorian Parliament is to be dissolved on the 9th March, and Mr Francis's (the Chief Secretary) election address will appear next day.

The elections are likely to cause great excitement.

The New Guinea Colonisation movement is progressing strongly, and the promoters intend asking for the cession of 10,000 acres of land from the natives.

SYDNEY, February 28.—Mr McLeary has presented his natural history collection and £7000 to the Sydney University.

The Palmer River rush is over, and all who can are returning. Numbers are dying on the road of starvation and exhaustion. The township is almost completely deserted, and provisions are so scarce that they are at famine prices, while to add to the misery the rivers are flooded.

HIBERNIAN AUSTRALASIAN CATHOLIC BENEFIT SOCIETY.

The Quarterly Meeting of St. Joseph's Branch No. 73, was held last Monday evening. There was a large attendance. The President in the Chair.

The Secretary read letters from Bro. Byrne, Corresponding Secretary; Bro. Howard, Past Chief President; and from Bro. Griffin, the Representative of the Otago Branches of the Annual Movable Meeting of the Society, which was held last week at Melbourne; all the letters contained information of the utmost importance to the Branch.

The Secretary read a letter from Bro. C. E. Bunny, in which he stated that owing to his long absence from the Branch, and the uncertainty of his return, he considered it his bounden duty to tender his resignation as Vice-President, at the same time thanking the members for the respect that they had shewn to him and to his office during the time that he held the position. His resignation was accepted, and Bro. Charles Fearon, the late Guardian, being the only officer eligible for the office, was appointed in his stead.

Mr Frederick William Hoffman was duly initiated a full Benefit Member.

The Secretary read the Balance Sheet, which was received subject to the Report of the Auditors.

The new banner of the Society was unfurled by Bro. J. Moylan, to whom had been entrusted the duty of getting it executed. The banner, which is painted on green silk, by Mr Power, Leith street, is so exquisitely done, that it exceeded the members' highest expectation, and the unfurling was met with a rapturous and prolonged applause. A hearty vote of thanks was proposed to Bro. J. Moylan for his indefatigable zeal in getting the banner finished in time for the Supper on St. Patrick's Day. Bro. J. Moylan stated that in buying the silk for the banner, the seller would not cut the piece, consequently there were six yards over, but that this would not be a loss to the Society, as Mr Power promised him that if the Branch so desired, he would paint the "Hair of Erin" on it, and that he would do so gratuitously; the announcement was received with cheers. The banner is a very handsome one, being a credit to the Society, and to the Artist.

The Secretary stated that Bro. Brennan had kindly volunteered

to get the Society's dispensation framed prior to the supper at his own expense, and he thought that the least they could do in order to repay him was to record him a sincere vote of thanks. The proposition was received with warmth, and carried by acclamation.

The secretary to the Supper Committee stated that an agreement had been made with Mr Gollar, confectioner, Albany street, to supply the supper at 7s per head; that the services of Mr Charles Sykes, pianist, and Mr O'Connell, violinist, had been procured. Tickets were distributed amongst the members, each of them pledging their word to do their utmost to dispose of as many as possible.

A number of the members volunteered to decorate the schoolroom on the morning of St. Patrick's Day with flags, evergreens, and flowers.

Friends to the cause having gardens will confer a great favor to the Society by giving as many flowers as they can spare to the members of the branch, many of whom will be in the schoolroom all the day.

Tickets may be obtained from Mr Macedo, bookseller, Princes street.

Persons intending to be present should procure their tickets immediately, in order that the caterer may know how many he is expected to provide for.

We trust to see a good sprinkling of the fair sex present.

RANDOM NOTES.

A chief's among ye takia' notes,
An' faich he'll prent 'em.

There seems to be a disposition on the part of the Great Unpaid to make it tropical for any offending Son of Neptune who may be brought before them. The principal crime at present laid to the charge of Jack is that he is desirous to partake of the general prosperity of the colony, and try his fortunes on land instead of sea. Whenever such severance from his ship is not indorsed by his captain, the law is invoked, and no matter how weighty the penalty, the general verdict seems to be "Served him right; hit him again, he has no friends." Now it is a bad rule that will not work both ways; and I fail to see the equity of all the justice (?) being on one side. As matters stand at present, a master who has shipped his crew in any port other than a Victorian, is at liberty to discharge his entire crew, and re-ship a company at a port where the wages are considerably less than what he has been paying, leaving the unfortunate men where there is a surplus of labor, and consequently at a disadvantage. One would imagine that were protection enough; but this is how Jack is protected. If he unfortunately takes French leave, or even absents himself from his ship for forty-eight hours, he is liable to be apprehended as a deserter, and the term of imprisonment to which he is subjected is governed entirely by the whim or state of bile of the presiding power, in addition to having his pay forfeited. Why is this thus? Why should all the equity and sympathy be on the side of the one; while the other has not only to bear the brunt of his offences (!) but encounter a certain degree of odium which attaches itself to it? I pause for a reply.

The elections have come and passed, and the seat vacated by the Hon. John has already found a successor. The aspirants for the coveted honor were four in number, but in reality the contest lay between but two; as the successful candidate could have afforded to have the numbers polled by his three opponents bulked and still head the list. It is said that the candidature of Mr Chapman originated in a joke;—to which, however, he was not a party. I can easily believe the first, whilst doubting the second statement. If, however, the full story be correct, then Mr Chapman has unconsciously been the means of imparting a deal of genuine amusement. This was the more opportune as an accident had prevented Middle Jenny Claus from appearing in the earlier part of the week, but if she had done so, I question whether the attendance would have been numerous, in the face of the counter attractions. Mr Chapman, who appeared in the character of the "Untried Member," in the different portions of the city, was always received with the appreciation he so richly deserved; and the gravity with which he replied to the query "whether he would be in favor of subsidising State soft soap manufactories?" by answering "decidedly not; it would be manifestly unfair to the present ones," fairly convulsed his audience, and would have made Niobe herself smile again. Such innocence, and the utter want of suspicion of banter is most refreshing in these precocious days, and speaks highly for the native Duanedinites. No doubt the result of the election as affecting Mr Chapman is due to the solicitude of the electors who are anxious to preserve this *rara avis*, and are fearful that were he sent to herd with the wily ones who perch in the Provincial Council, the experience there to be learned would not be so desirable as his present blissful innocence.

PETER POSSUM.

THE 'TABLET,' THE 'GUARDIAN,' AND THE 'ULTRAMONTANES.'

In your article of the 7th inst. you treat the 'Otago Guardian' as honest Isaac Walton recommended all anglers to treat their fish after "hooking him." You treat the 'Guardian' "gently." This is the best mode of dealing with such men. His principles, so far as regards the treatment of his Catholic fellow citizens, are no doubt abominably arbitrary, unjust, and cruel. He obviously would, if he had the power, exterminate the Catholic Church without much regard to the means he employed, or at least he would destroy its independence entirely, and make it a mere department of the Civil Government, after the manner of Bismarck, and place it under "a Board" or "a Ministry of Worship and Public Industries." Of course he would serve all other religious denominations after the same fashion, except Presbyterianism perhaps.

But then a man may be a perjurer, a murderer, or a thief innocently—under certain circumstances—and all in good faith, and under a mistake. He may swear falsely in ignorance, excusable ignorance, and without malice or corrupt motive. He may take the life of his