

The *N. Z. Herald* in its issue of the 5th inst. has a leader relating to the differences amongst the Ministers, and in which these words occur:—"The Roman Catholic organ prays that the difference may be on the education question, and that the Premier's colleagues may be opposed to him on that point at least. Our hopes are in direct opposition to those of the Church on this point." We regret that our contemporary is so void of all sense of justice as to look with disfavour on a probability of the Ministerial minds inclining in a right direction, and that it is desirous of the continuance of the gross wrong inflicted by the secular system upon the Catholic branch of the community.

We learn from the *Hokitika Leader* that the rush to the north of the Teremakau has not been extending much of late, and it is not looked upon with such hope as it was a few weeks ago. The population is reduced to a little over two hundred, about a fourth of whom are said to be on gold, and the rest prospecting, which is much heavier work than at Kumara. The site of the new township on the north of the Teremakau is about a mile and a half from the centre of the diggings, or where the bulk of the claims are at work. This is much complained of by the business people, though the rush may yet tend more towards the township.

A GENTLEMAN who arrived in town yesterday (says the *Cooktown Herald*) from the Palmer, informs us that the district is overrun with destitute Chinese, in a state of starvation, wandering here and there, unable to obtain the necessaries of life, and that they were committing wholesale robberies for bare sustenance. Our informant states that he would not be at all surprised if Cooktown was visited by a few thousands of these starving men, and as they are all armed, what resistance could a few make? The immigrants from the Flowery Land are still coming, and we learn that a ship, the size of the Galley of Lorne, is on the way with another thousand. What is to be done with these, we know not. If 5,000 are already starving, where is there an opening for the other 1,000? Later advices from the Palmer inform us that the Chinese are deserting that district *en masse*, and that two or three thousands of them are on the march for the Hodgkinson. We also learn that all the brethren by the Thales and Galley of Lorne have gone direct from this port to the same district.

### TELEGRAMS.

SINGAPORE, June 7th.

Lord Derby refuses the proposal to neutralise the Suez Canal. He informed the Russian Ambassador at London, the Porte, and the Khedive, that England has determined to disallow warlike operations on the Canal.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Stafford Northcote) refused to table a copy of the despatch *re* the Suez Canal on the ground of incompetency, though asked by Lord Hartington to do so.

LONDON, June 7th.

It is stated semi-officially from St. Petersburg that the Russian Ambassadors at London, Berlin, and Vienna are returning to their several embassies, not charged with any special negotiations, but with instructions to reassert the assurances given by Russia prior to the war.

In the House of Commons last night, Mr. Bourke, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, said the Government believed that the Powers interested could not concur with the action of England. Sir Stafford Northcote also stated that the Government had no desire to impose belligerent rights, its only object being to protect the Suez Canal.

SINGAPORE, June 9, 11.30 p.m.

The Turks have attacked and defeated the Montenegrin troops.

The Emperor of Russia has arrived at Ploiesti.

The Turks are bombarding Giurgevo.

Three Russian frigates from America have arrived at Brest.

The right wing of the Russian army in Asia has reached Majkhal, beyond Olti, and the left wing entered Karahisar unopposed.

A Turkish governor has been appointed to Sukum Kale.

LONDON, June 9.

The passage of the Danube is expected at Nicopolis.

The main Turkish army in Asia has encamped at Hassan Kaleh.

WELLINGTON, June 8.

The following tenders have been received for the Balclutha contract of the Waitaki-Invercargill Railway:—Accepted: Proudfoot and McKay, £10,000. Declined: Dey, £10,132; Watson, £10,398; Mathieson Brothers, £10,503; A. J. Smyth, £10,770; Millar and Murray, £11,030; T. H. Parsons, £11,351; Henderson and Ferguson, £11,846; McNeil, £14,750.

June 11.

Mr. Travers, on behalf of the citizens, presented an address and pures of 175 sovereigns to Michael Monaghan, late senior sergeant in the police force here. There was a large attendance of merchants and other leading citizens at the presentation.

LONDON, June 10th.

Berlin papers consider the dissolving of the French Chamber would imply a triumph to the Ultramontanes, and involve a general conflagration of Europe.

The Czar is at Bucharest.

The Russian right wing is falling back on Pennek.

The Turks from Batoum are operating in the Circassian Province.

Lord Salisbury, at Taylor's banquet, insisted on the necessity of maintaining the peace of Europe and being ready to defend England's interest if assailed.

Lord Derby concurred, adding that the maintenance of peace was of the greatest importance to British interests.

Official despatches state that the Russians attempted to pass the Danube at Nicopolis, but were repulsed.

The Russian Press is indignant, and states that Russia will not be satisfied with peace without solid guarantees.

The Turks have been successful in Montenegro.

The Russians are massing troops opposite Rustchuk and Nicopolis.

The Turkish Chamber has forced a loan of five millions.

### COMMERCIAL.

MR. HENRY DRIVER (on behalf of the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company) reports for the week ending June 13, as follows:—

Fat Cattle.—208 head were yarded, which, with the exception of a few pens, were of medium quality only. Best pens of bullocks brought from £10 10s. to £15 15s.; do cows, £6 to £9 10s.—or equal to 30s. per 100lb. for prime quality, and 25s. to 27s. 6d. for medium.

Fat Calves.—Nineteen were penned, which readily sold at 25s. to 75s.

Fat Sheep.—The market was slightly over-supplied with 2934, but they were all sold at a small reduction on last week's quotations. Best cross-breeds brought from 11s. to 14s.; medium do., 7s. to 10s.—or scarcely equal to 2½d. per lb.; merinos, 4s. 6d. to 7s. 6d.

Store Cattle and Sheep.—We have no important transactions to report.

Grain.—Wheat is in good demand; choice milling, 7s.; good, 6s. 6d. to 6s. 9d.; inferior, 5s. to 5s. 6d., according to quality; fowls' feed, 4s. 6d. Oats are in great demand. We sold at auction 700 bags of feed at 3s. 6d. to 3s. 6½d., and 500 bags milling at 3s. 7½d. There are very few coming forward, farmers expecting still higher rates, owing to the deficiency of the yield of this crop. Barley: Malting is a little more inquired for, and could finer samples be offered, a large business could be done; but brewers will not hold heavy stocks of the discoloured parcels offering. We have sold at 3s. 6d. to 4s. for fair samples. Feed barley has participated in the advance of oats. At our sale yesterday, 300 bags sold at 3s. 1d. to 3s. 2d.

Wool.—The latest cablegram to hand reports more animation at the wool sales, greasy combing having recovered the opening fall, bringing prices to a par with closing rates of March series. Washed fleece and cross-breeds were 1d. lower than those rates. There is a more hopeful tone in the market since the May sales commenced, removing the fear that the heavy withdrawals lately reported would seriously affect the August and September series, when the bulk of the New Zealand would be offered. We sold a few bales of greasy fleece at our usual Monday auction, which sold at rather high values. We quote fair average greasy fleece at 9d. per lb.

Sheepskins.—We had a full supply of 2,500 skins, which were briskly competed for at a slight advance on last week's rates—green butchers' bringing 3s. to 3s. 6d.; merinoes, 2s. 5d. to 2s. 7d.; dry cross-breeds, 2s. 10d. to 3s. 4d.

Hides.—Supply short, demand not brisk; prices are a little easier this week. We sold heavies at 21s. to 23s.; medium, 16s. to 19s. 6d.; light and inferior, 7s. to 12s.; slightly over 4d. per lb. for good-conditioned hides.

Tallow continues in brisk demand; mixed inferior, 29s. 6d. to 31s. 6d. for medium quality; shipping lots are saleable up to £35.

MR. SKENE reports for the week ending June 13, 1877:—There are few complaints in the labour market at present. Labourers for pick and shovel work are in good demand. Farm people, single and married, are at once secured. Men on long engagements are best off in the winter months; they do not feel the broken time like day men. Carpenters, masons, bricklayers, plasterers, &c., only need good weather to let them get at their work. Plasterers are much wanted; gardeners are fully employed. Male hotel servants are rather quiet. Shepherds are quite neglected. Female servants, in every department, are very short of the demand. Enquiry is slight for town-bred people, such as shopmen and clerks. Upon the whole, the prospects of good hard working men, suited for the colony, are encouraging. The useless weeds, introduced by the immigration bungling, are gradually disappearing. Wages—Couples, £60, £70, and £80; day labour, 7s., 8s., 9s., and 10s.; ploughmen, £52 to £60; dairy hands, 15s., 20s., and 25s.; carpenters, 10s. to 12s.; cooks, boots, waiters, grooms, &c., 15s., 20s., 30s., and 40s.; house girls, 10s. to 20s.; hotel girls, 12s. to 30s.; storemen and clerks, 30s. to 60s.; boys and girls, 6s. to 10s., &c., &c.

MR. A. MERCER reports as follows for the week ending June 13, 1877, retail prices only:—Fresh butter, in ¼ and 1lb prints, 1s 6d to 1s 7d per lb; fresh butter, in lumps, 1s 4d; powdered and salt butter, 1s 4d. Fresh butter is pretty plentiful—but butter of the best quality is scarce. Salt butter in keg is very plentiful, and little or no sale at any quotation. Cheese, best quality, 10d to 1s; English cheese 1s 4d, no demand; side and rolled bacon, 10d to 1s; Colonial hams, 1s to 1s 2d; English hams, no demand, 1s 4d. Eggs, although not plentiful, are falling in price—2s 6d to 2s 9d per doz.

MR. J. FLEMING reports (wholesale prices) for the week ending June 13th, 1877, as follows:—Oats (feed), per bushel, 3s; milling, 3s 3d. Wheat (chicks), 3s 9d to 4s. Barley, malting, 4s to 4s 6d; feed, 2s 6d to 3s. Pollard, scarce. Bran, £4 5s, bags included. Flour, large bags, £18; small, £18 10s. Oatmeal, £18. Potatoes, £3 15s per ton. Hay, £4 per ton. Chaff, £4 10s per ton. Straw, £2 per ton.

MR. J. VEZEY reports for the week ending June 13th, 1877, retail:—Roast beef, 5d to 8d per lb; boiling do, 4d to 5d per lb; stewing do, 4d to 6d per lb; steak, 6d to 9d per lb; mutton, 2d to 5d per lb; veal, 4d to 8d per lb; pork, 6d to 8d per lb; lamb, scarce, 2s to 3s 6d per quarter.

In Algeria is a church believed to be the oldest Christian church in the world. In the basement is a stone with an inscription stating that the church was built in A.D. 328.