

Telegrams.

(REUTER'S SPECIAL.)

CALCUTTA, December 19th.

Notwithstanding the open hostility of the tribes preventing the marching of troops previously, General Gough started from Gandamak for Cabul on the 17th. He encountered no opposition, and marched all day. He telegraphed on the 18th that he had met with no serious opposition. Notman, with a strong force, is co-operating with General Gough in maintaining communication.

(SPECIAL TO THE MELBOURNE AGE.)

LONDON, (undated).

General Gough marched on Gundamak, attempting to occupy Jagdalak Pass, when the hostile tribes in overwhelming strength checked his advance, and seriously imperilled the force of General Nugent. A strong detachment is advancing in forced marches to his relief.

In response to the appeal of the Viceroy, Lord Napier of Magdala will be summoned from London, probably to conduct the Afghan war.

Nihilists attempted to assassinate the Governor of Moscow. The Governor is uninjured.

CALCUTTA, December 20th.

General Gough arrived at Jagdallak unopposed yesterday. The Ghilzais hovering about, though numerous, were a disorganised rabble. The other tribes are quiet.

Norman is rapidly advancing.

December 22nd.

The latest intelligence from General Roberts, on the 18th, states all well. There has been no further fighting; remaining on the defence at Shurpur.

General Roberts urges General Gough's immediate advance in light order, and says he will find no opposition, and when reinforcements arrive, he can settle Cabul affairs without difficulty.

General Gough left to-day with 140 men and four guns. The roads to Cabul are clear.

LONDON, December 20th.

At a Conservative meeting at Leeds, Sir Stafford Northcote made a speech in which he stated the policy of Government was unaffected by Afghan affairs. It continues to be defence, not annexation.

December 21st.

By latest news from the Cape the British troops had taken the stronghold of Secocoeni. Two officers were killed and four wounded.

(REUTER'S SPECIAL.)

SYDNEY, December 21st.

Two Chinamen were discovered in a suburb of Sydney afflicted with leprosy. One was poisoned, and it is supposed he committed suicide. The other was taken away late on Saturday night to La Perouse, close to the landing-place of the New Zealand cable, and put in a tent near the beach. The place is a favourite picnic ground, and great indignation is manifested by the cable and Custom-house people. A strong remonstrance was sent to the Premier. As the action means the absolute isolation of the cable station as an incurable quarantine-station, it will possibly affect telegraphic communication with New Zealand. It is hoped the New Zealand Government will remonstrate with the Sydney Government. There is great alarm, as the disease is of a most loathsome form.

PARIS, December 21st.

The Ministry have resigned, and Monsieur Freycinet is engaged forming a new one.

CALCUTTA, December 22nd.

General Gough is continuing to advance. Yesterday, the Ghilzais were harassing his troops, so that he attacked and defeated them, driving them from the heights.

Bright reports the general advance of reinforcements. He reaches Gundamak shortly, and will then co-operate with General Gough.

(SPECIAL TO THE MELBOURNE AGE.)

LONDON, December 21st.

General Gough is marching on Cabul with 2500 men and six guns.

Secocoeni is reported to have been killed.

The Revolutionary party are inactive in the Spanish provinces. The Government have ordered the arrest of the leaders of the party, including many military officers.

Commercial.

PRODUCE MARKET—DEC. 24, 1879,

Mr. J. Fleming reports for the week ending Dec. 24, 1879:—Wholesale prices, oats, 1s 8d to 1s 10d per bushel; milling wheat, 4s 9d to 5s per bushel; chicks, 3s 6d to 3s 3d; barley, malting, 5s 6d per bushel; feed, 3s to 3s 6d; pollard, £5 0s per ton; bran, £4 10s per ton; flour, £11 10s to £12 per ton; oatmeal, £12 per ton; potatoes, £6 per ton; hay, £4 per ton; chaff, £4 to £4 5s per ton; straw, £2s 5s per ton; onions, 14s per cwt.; new kidney potatoes, 11s per cwt.; round potatoes, 8s; imported, 6s to 8s.

MESSRS. MERCER and McDONALD, Rattray street, report:—Fresh butter (best and favourite brands) 11b. and ½lb prints, 10d to 1s per lb.; good ordinary butter, 9d to 10d per lb.; eggs are 1s 4d per doz.; cheese, 7d per lb.; hams, 11d per lb.; bacon, 10d per lb.

Farmers and others engaged in agricultural pursuits will find all the newest improvements in machinery suited to their requirements at the establishment of Messrs. T. Robinson and Co., Dunedin. Particulars will be found in our advertisement columns.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL, LAWRENCE.

(From the *Tuapeka Times*.)

THE annual distribution of prizes in connection with this school took place on Monday at noon, in the presence of a number of parents and friends of the children. The school was adorned with a large number of beautiful specimens of needlework, knitting, etc., executed by the children, who were present to the number of about a hundred. His Lordship Bishop Moran, who arrived by the midday train from Dunedin, took the chair a few minutes after the arrival of the train. His Lordship was accompanied by the Rev. Father Nieupoort, the Rev. Father Crowley, and the teachers, Mr. and Miss Horan. Father Crowley explained the principle on which the prizes were to be awarded. Only two prizes would be given to any one pupil, beyond that the reward would be honorary. His Lordship the Bishop then handed the various prizes (eighty-three volumes in all, besides miscellaneous articles) to the pupils, as their names were read by the teacher, Mr. Horan. In cases of equality the order of priority was determined by lot. It is worthy of remark that as the school is conducted entirely by the voluntary contributions of the congregation, so the prizes were presented by members of the congregation, and other well-wishers of the cause of education, amongst whom Mrs. S. Hales (whom we observed present on the occasion) was, we understand, a large contributor. The following is the prize list:—

CLASS I.—History: 1st, H. Hart; 2nd, J. O'Connor.—Geography 1st, H. Kelly; 2nd, M. Drew.—Grammar, 1st, H. Hart; 2nd, H. Kelly.—Arithmetic: 1st, H. Kelly; 2nd, M. Drew.—Reading: 1st, J. O'Connor; 2nd, H. Kelly and M. Drew.—Catechism: 1st, M. Whelan; 2nd, S. McCann.—Writing: 1st, J. O'Connor; 2nd, A. Malone.

CLASS II.—History: 1st, T. Kelleher; 2nd, M. White.—Geography: 1st, M. Tracey; 2nd, J. Rodgers.—Grammar: 1st, M. Tracey; 2nd, J. Drew.—Arithmetic: 1st, D. Kelly; 2nd, E. M'Cluskey.—Reading: 1st, M. Rodgers; 2nd, M. White.—Catechism: 1st, E. Keppel; 2nd, M. Keppel.—Writing: 1st, M. White; 2nd, T. Kelleher.

CLASS III.—Spelling: 1st, M. Flynn; 2nd, M. Hoare.—Geography: 1st, M. Feynn; 2nd, C. Cranley.—Grammar: 1st, B. Whelan; 2nd, J. Cranly.—Arithmetic: 1st, J. Cranley; 2nd, J. Connor.—Reading: 1st, J. Long; 2nd, E. White.—Catechism: 1st, J. Peters; 2nd, M. Hoare.—Writing: 1st, M. Hoare; 2nd, B. Whelan.

CLASS IV.—Spelling: 1st, G. M'Cluskey; 2nd, C. Cranley.—Geography: 1st, T. O'Driscoll; 2nd, J. Roughan.—Grammar: 1st, T. O'Driscoll; 2nd, J. Whelan.—Arithmetic: 1st, J. Roughan; 2nd, M. Roughan.—Reading: C. Cranley; 2nd, M. Airey.—Catechism: 1st, W. Joyce; 2nd, M. Airey.

CLASS V.—Spelling: 1st, C. Fitzgerald; 2nd, C. Kelly.—Reading: 1st, C. Kelly; 2nd, J. Flynn.—Arithmetic: 1st, J. O'Leary; 2nd, W. Drew.

CLASS VI.—Spelling: 1st, P. O'Leary; 2nd, C. Rodgers.—Reading: 1st, M. Connors; 2nd, J. Airey.—Arithmetic: 1st, J. Airey; 2nd, T. Roughan.

SPECIAL PROGRESS.—Attendance: M. Airey and T. Kelleher. Good conduct: E. M'Cluskey and J. Cummings.—Work: 1st, C. Grogan; 2nd, C. Cranley; 3rd, A. Kelly; 4th, J. O'Leary.—Arithmetic (Mr Connor's prize): H. Hart.—Catechism: H. Hart.—Algebra and Geometry: H. Hart.

On the conclusion of the distribution of prizes, the Bishop delivered an address, which will be found in our leading columns. The school was afterwards dismissed until January 15th.

CHRISTCHURCH.

A MEMORABLE DAY.

MONDAY the 8th inst. being the Feast of the Immaculate Conception was chosen as the day on which the children of the required age in the parish, should make their first communion.

Rev. Father Devoy, Spiritual Director of the Sunday schools, had been incessant in his endeavours to prepare the little ones for this great act of their lives, and judging from the large number (130) who were presented on that morning his labours had not been in vain.

The Feast, though not one of obligation, was generally observed as such by the people. There were three Masses during the day, and benediction during the evening. At the children's Mass, which took place at 9.30 A.M., the Church was crowded, there being at least 600 boys and girls belonging to the schools, and more than twice as many adults. The girls, (under the care of their devoted and self-sacrificing teachers, the Sisters) were all neatly attired, especially those approaching Holy Communion, who wore white robes decked with wreaths and veils. The boys, too, were in their holiday garb; the privileged ones wearing rosettes, white gloves and ties. Mass was celebrated by the Rev. Father Devoy, the children singing suitable hymns, and Professor Hughes accompanying on the grand organ.

After the Gospel the good priest who had already done so much towards preparing these children, addressed them for the last time previous to their receiving. The words of his text were, "Suffer the little children to come to me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." That he succeeded in interesting them with the preference shown innocent little ones by our Lord when he made use of these words was most evident. The rev. Father recapitulated, as it were, his previous instructions to them; and whilst not frightening or perplexing them in the least, he nevertheless forcibly impressed upon their young minds the stupendous favour about to be bestowed on them by Jesus Christ in giving Himself to them as their spiritual food. He was evidently much affected himself, whilst discoursing on the great love of God for mankind. His words had a remarkable effect upon the whole congregation, many of whom were moved to tears. That his words were thoroughly understood by the children was evident from their subsequent demeanour. Their devout attention dur-